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Inquisitive Clinton; Or, He Wanted to Know All about It.

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK.

"'WHO IS THAT?' PANTED THE PUGNACIOUS INDIVIDUAL, POINTING TO THE BOY. 'IS HE IN HIS RIGHT SENSES?' 'HE IS MR. COLBY'S NEPHEW,' REPLIED THE CHIEF CLERK."

A NEW STORY, "INQUISITIVE CLINTON; Or, HE WANTED TO KNOW ALL ABOUT IT," BEGINS IN THIS NUMBER.

INQUISITIVE CLINTON;

Or,

HE WANTED TO KNOW ALL ABOUT IT.

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK,

Author of "KEEP YOUR BOUNDS," "INVENTIVE BEN," "ORVILLE AND DAN," "THE CREW AT HARVARD COLLEGE," "THROUGH THE HEART OF JAPAN," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

CLINTON LEE.

"I'M your nephew, Clinton Lee," said a sharp-featured, quick-eyed, large-eared youth, as he handed a letter to a gentleman seated at a desk in an office overlooking the City Hall Park, New York.

The person addressed looked up from his writing, and, without betraying any feeling either of surprise or annoyance, opened the communication and read as follows:

"POQUAM, Monday Morning.

"BROTHER CLINTON COLBY.—When husband died you said when Clinton got old enough you would get him a position. He has graduated at our high school, and knows considerable more than you did at his age. I therefore beg to remind you of your promise. Clint, as I always call him, is honest, truthful, smart and good; has never tasted anything stronger than cider, or smoked. His only trouble is a desire for information, which may be put to good use in your business.

"Remember me to Hannah. Tell her to let me know if she wants any yarn for Clint's hose. Your sister, MRS. SERENA LEE."

Mr. Colby, the lawyer, glanced from this singular epistle to the newcomer, and, extending his hand, said, in a quiet tone:

"Nephew, I am glad to see you."

"I knowed you would be!" quickly replied the boy, as, with a sort of hop, he landed on the desk occupied by his uncle. "I told mother you'd be dreadful glad."

As he spoke he wrung his relative's hand and stared him hard in the face, after the fashion of Poquam folks, at the same time winking so rapidly that, spite of his annoyance, his uncle could not avoid smiling.

"Yes," continued Clint, I sed to everybody, 'You're mistaken 'bout uncle!' I felt sarten sure you'd cotton to me right away! Well, how are you?—how's Aunt Hannah?—how do you like living in York?—how's your health?—and—how's business?"

"Clinton," gently observed his uncle, "I am glad to see you, and will do my best to procure you a position, but——"

Ere he could complete his sentence the boy gave his hand a second squeeze and said:

"Oh, I ain't at all particular. I'm not one of the lazybones sort. I can work;'—adding, gleefully, 'and I ain't proud, either. Mother told me as how you quitted Poquam with only a quarter in your pocket, and how you swept office until they got you 'within' better to do an' finally, by marrying your employer's daughter, how you come in for a lot of money. Of course, I don't expect to do more than you did."

Mr. Colby regarded him with quiet forbearance, he being a large-hearted man of the world, then said:

"Nephew, here in New York people do not shout when speaking, nor do we, when calling on a man of business, seat ourselves on his desk."

Clint grinned innocently, and springing from his perch, dropped into a chair, remarking:

"You needn't mind telling me 'bout things, sir. I like to know your ways. When any one means well I never git mad. I know New York styles ain't same as ours at Poquam. You're more stuck up, starchy, high-toned and fashionable than we are. Say, how do you get a living? I ain't seen no customers in since I've bin here."

Some men would have been offended by this rustic ignorance, but Mr. Colby was not one of that sort.

He remembered the time when he was just as green as his nephew, so determined to do his best for the boy.

"Clint," he said, "I am anxious to keep my word with your mother, and will do all in my power for you."

"I knew it!" cried the lad. "Old Ben Simmons, who keeps the dry-goods store—you know him, uncle—says to mother, 'Oh, your brother won't do anything for Clint. He's a lawyer, and they are the meanest things created,' says he."

"Probably some of my brethren may warrant such a description," was the other's unmoved rejoinder. "You will find all sorts of men in every profession. Now, Clint, I wish to talk seriously with you."

"I wasn't joking," gravely answered the boy. "I told you the facts jes' as I got them. Old Ben said that law was pisen, anyhow, and that afore he'd have a son of his learn the business he'd prefer to see him in his coffin."

"Has Simmons any sons?" slyly inquired Mr. Colby.

Clint grinned from ear to ear as he replied:

"Well, no, he ain't; hain't all gals," adding, encouragingly, as though anxious not to hurt his uncle's feelings: "Don't you worry about him; he don't amount to anything."

The lawyer smiled, and after inquiring if Clint had taken lunch, said:

"I am very busy over a case, and cannot go out with you to a restaurant. Here is a dollar; you'll find plenty of places where you can get a meal for less than that. Walk about and see the city until five o'clock, then return here, and I will take you home with me."

"All right," said the boy.

When Clint had quitted the room, Mr. Colby leaned back in his chair and thought:

"What shall I do with him?"

He knew it was his duty to be patient, to wait until the lad saw the difference between his old life and new, and to help Clint, as he himself had once been assisted.

He was aware, in doing this, he would have to put up with much that was annoying, notwithstanding which he did not shrink from the task.

Taking a sheet of paper from a drawer in his desk, he wrote:

"DEAR HANNAH.—Clinton Lee, the son of my sister Serena, has turned up. He is Poquam from his hat to his cowhides, but honest and all right in every other respect. I want you to receive him just as though he were different, and to help me make a man of him.

"CLINTON COLBY."

This he dispatched by a messenger, having done which he resumed his usual occupation, and temporarily forgot there was such a person as his nephew.

The latter sauntered round for a while, bewildered with the number and magnificence of the restaurants, then approaching a police-officer, said:

"Mister, will you tell me where I can get a good, square meal for half a dollar?"

The man regarded him closely, and after satisfying himself of the speaker's greenness, pointed to a basement refreshment-room, saying:

"Go down there."

"Thank you, mister," said Clint. "Say, how much do you get a week for being a policeman?"

"That's my business!" growled the officer.

"Oh, you needn't get mad," continued the boy. "I know a fellow in Poquam who wants a position like yours. Do you have to find your own clothes, or does the city give 'em to you?"

The remarks attracted quite a crowd; noticing which the officer sternly observed:

"There, you go and get your dinner. I've got something else to do besides talk to you."

"Have I said anything out of the way?" persisted Clint. "I only wanted to know."

"You go and get your feed," said the man, who could not avoid smiling. "The likes of you ought to have some one to take care of them."

"Oh, I've got an uncle in this city," said Clint, with which he descended the steps, and addressing a fleshy man who was standing at the foot, picking his teeth, demanded: "Are you the proprietor of this place?"

"Do I look like it?" snarled the person.

The boy eyed him from head to foot, and giving vent to a dry chuckle, replied:

"Yew dew."

"Where did you come from?" snapped the other, who was a wealthy merchant, with an economical turn of mind.

"Poquam!" said Clint.

"Well, take my advice and go back again," savagely observed the man, tossing away his toothpick. "There are enough loonies now in New York."

Clint was about to ask him what he meant, when the proprietor, a short, fussy man, bustled forward and inquired his business.

Upon discovering the boy was a customer, he said:

"You can have pigeon pot-pie an' 'taters, or corn-beef hash an' cabbage for fifty cents. Sit right down; I'll send a waiter to you."

The lad hung his hat on a peg, and followed his host's advice, ordering pot-pie and fixings.

While the attendant was absent, Clint glanced inquisitively about him, his eager eyes taking in everything at sight.

He saw that some of the customers put on airs, and heard them complain loudly, so deeming it the correct thing to do, determined to follow their example.

Presently back came the waiter, saying:

"Pot-pie all out; corn-beef hash splendid. Cabbage elegant!"

"I don't understand this," Clint began, in a loud tone.

"I want——"

Before he could conclude the sentence, the man said: "Take the hash? All right."

Away he went, leaving his customer wondering whether he had uttered the words, and presently back he came, bearing a tray on which were the viands named.

"See here," said the boy, "I don't want pickles or bread-and-butter. You can't pile extras on to me like that."

"You needn't eat them. They're not extras," was the quick reply. "Here's your check; I've no time to talk. If you don't like what I've brought you, complain to the proprietor."

The place was crammed full, and guests were shouting for the attendants.

"I see," mused Clint; "these people think, because I'm from Poquam, they can put me off with anything. I'll just look at the ticket before I taste this. Like as not I've got into one of those places I've read about, where they bring you a bill for several dollars worth more than you've ordered;" suspiciously, "shouldn't wonder if that policeman who sent me here gets sarbin' by recommending folks. I heard 'bout this afore I left Poquam."

He picked up the check as he spoke, and saw printed upon it: "2—50."

"I knowed it," he cried, addressing a young man who was quietly eating dinner at the same table. "Which is the proprietor of this concern, young fellow?"

"There he is talking to that thin man at the next table," said the other.

Up rose Clint, and advancing to the person indicated, he flourished his check, and exclaimed, in a loud, genial tone:

"Say, mister, s'pose you think because I take things easy and am a stranger in these parts you can charge me a taney price, eh? You ain't going to get two-fifty out of me!"

The boy looked so comical and spoke with such a drawl that every one turned to ascertain what was the matter.

"Two-fifty!" said the proprietor, taking the pasteboard from Clinton's hand. "This is a check for fifty cents, given by waiter number two."

"You don't say!" ejaculated the lad. "I thought you were trying to get the best of me. All right, mister. Shake hands. No offense."

Ere the astonished host could reply, Clint had received the card and was back to the table.

Of course his proceeding vastly amused the other guests, many of whom paused in their meal in order to see what he would do next.

Clint nodded to the other occupant of the space, and heedless of the spectators' audible remarks, began to devour the food, which rapidly vanished between his lips.

"He's a comical specimen of our country cousin," said one.

"I don't believe he ever saw a four-tined fork," remarked another.

"He'll swallow his knife outright, presently," observed a third.

All of a sudden, just as the boy was transferring the last of the hash to his plate, he noticed a round piece of bone, chipped by the mincing-machine from the end of a knuckle.

For a moment he regarded it with protruding eyes, as though hopelessly scrutinizing his bones, then starting up his head and pointing to the object, shouted to the proprietor:

"Say, mister, come here. What's this made of?"

"Oh, you're at it again, are you?" good-humoredly replied the man, advancing as he spoke. "What do you think it's made of?"

Clint stared wildly, first at the hash and next at the proprietor, after which, addressing the convulsed customers, he gasped:

"There's a—button in it."

CHAPTER II.

CLINT IS INTRODUCED TO HIS AUNT HANNAH.

THE proprietor, who naturally felt very indignant at the charge, expressed himself in most emphatic terms, winding up his speech by angrily ordering Clint to quit the premises.

Instead of doing as he was told, the boy coolly resumed his seat, and, to the intense amusement of the spectators, proceeded to re-examine his food, remarking, in his dry, knowing fashion:

"Guess I can tell them buttons when I see 'em. Mother's got a lot of 'em in a bag to hum. Of course they ain't shanked, they're always kivered with suthin."

"I'd like to kiver you, you greenhorn!" gasped the landlord, rendered furious by the jeering remarks of the lookers-on. "You just quit this restaurant. Any idiot can see what that is—it's the end of the round bone of a shin of beef."

Clint grinned as only a country boy can, then, turning to the laughing customers, chuckled and said:

"Guess he's right; it is what he says. But he's let out what he makes his hash of—beef-shins. Them's cheap where I come from."

The man grew red in the face and retired to his private room, believing it just as well to leave the lad alone.

When Clint had eaten the last morsel of the hash and cleared the various platters, he said to a waiter:

"Here, take my money. I think the stuff is dear, anyhow. Mrs. Scovill, down at Poquam, gives a good-filled dinner for a quarter."

This observation, being made in a loud tone, caused some of the younger among the customers to make fun of him; however, Clint saw through their designs, and upon being directed to the cashier, paid his check and returned to the street.

After wandering about the City Hall Park and gazing in at the various store-windows on the lower part of Broadway, he looked up at the clock and discovered it was time to return to his uncle.

"Well, Clint," exclaimed that gentleman, "did you have a good dinner?"

"Yes, sir," he answered, and settling in an easy-chair, proceeded to relate his experience.

Mr. Colby listened quietly, and when his nephew had concluded, remarked:

"It strikes me, Clint, that you want to know too much. Let me give you a little advice."

"I'm willing to take any quantity," innocently replied the lad. "You make a living by advising folks, don't you, sir?"

"Yes," nodded the lawyer, smiling in spite of himself. "Now listen attentively, my boy. I wish to keep my word, and to do something for you, but there are two things are in the way. First, your greenness, and secondly, your anxiety to know more than is good for you."

"Mother allers says a feller never can know too much," quickly retorted the lad. "She told me you got on through meddling with other folks' affairs, and used to throw it in my teeth that I was the double of you."

Mr. Colby could not be angry, his nephew evidently being in earnest, and not desirous of giving an impudent reply, so he said:

"Clint, there are two kinds of anxiety to learn—one like mine, tending to useful end, and the other like your own, resulting from mere inquisitiveness."

"Oh," murmured the boy, "go on! I see. You consider I'm inquisitive, do you? I want to know."

"I am going to try you in this office," continued his uncle; "will give you a home, clothes, and a dollar a week, all I ask being attention to what is told you, and your promise to restrain your desire to know everybody's affairs. If you learn quickly, and make yourself useful, I'll some day take you into my business. I have a partner, who will return to-morrow. He is a very quick-tempered, peculiar sort of man, and will not understand you at first, so I warn you to be cautious how you ask him questions. If you only take a proper time for acquiring information you will never get into trouble. What you have to learn in this: there is a time and place for all things. Listen more and talk less, and, above all things, don't refer to Poquam."

"I sin'tskehamed of it," said Clint.

"Nor am I, my boy," said his relative. "What I mean is this: Poquam ways are different from those of New York. Now, come along with me. The clerks have all gone, so we will have to lock up the place. By-the-way, where did you leave your baggage?"

"At the express office," answered the lad.

They descended the steps, and crossing the park, walked up Broadway until they came to an outfitter's, into which the lawyer went, followed by his relative.

"I want a good suit of clothes for this boy," said Mr. Colby. "Something that will wear and look well. You can also measure him for a best suit. While you are doing this I will step into my stationer's."

The foreman bowed, for he knew his customer as one of the leading lawyers of the city.

"This way," he said to Clint, who, since his uncle had spoken to him about talking so much, had been as silent as the sphynx. "Come into the first-class custom department."

Poor Clint! No sooner was his relative out of sight than he forgot his promise, and went for the salesman in this fashion:

"Say, do you sell many clothes? Are these made of sheep's wool? How much a week do you get? Are you married, mister? Ever see my uncle store? Ever see my Aunt Hannah? Ain't acquainted with any one at Poquam, eh? Ever have any of these fellers steal clothes? S'pose you make a big profit on these things?"

The man understood his customer, and answered him very seriously, while the other salesmen and persons buying paused and listened.

"I think that suit will fit you," he presently remarked.

"What's the price?" demanded Clint.

"Sixteen dollars," replied the man.

"Anything off for cash?" said the boy.

"This is a cash business," was the reply. "Come, remove your coat while I measure you for your best suit."

While he was speaking Mr. Colby returned, whereupon Clint became as silent as a mummy.

After the measurement was taken, the lawyer bade his companion follow him, and proceeding down a side street, they stopped a Broadway car and entered it.

The vehicle was almost full, and only the gentleman obtained a seat.

"Two," said the boy's uncle, handing a dime to the conductor.

Clint saw the man pocket the money and punch the strip for the fares.

This puzzled him and excited his curiosity.

He watched the performance carefully, and made up his mind to learn why the man had to do it.

They had no street-cars in Poquam.

His uncle was busily engaged in reading an evening newspaper, and the car was rapidly becoming uncomfortably full.

"Guess I'll go outside on the platform," he murmured, presently.

After wedging his way he succeeded in gaining the tailboard, on which he perched.

Presently, as they reached the junction of Broadway and Sixth Avenue, the passengers began to quit the car, whereupon Clint tackled the conductor as follows:

"Say, what's that thing you ring every time you take a fare?"

"A bell-punch," growled the man.

"I want to know," continued the boy, "why does it have a bell in it?"

"To show when a hole is punched in this strip," said the conductor, jerking at the strap in order to stop the car at Thirty-fifth Street. "Want to get off here?"

"No," grinned Clint, sticking to him like a leech. "I want to know about that bell-punch. Why do they make you wear such a homely-looking thing as that?"

There being several young men on the platform enjoying the fun, the conductor pretended not to hear what his tormentor said.

This only made Clint more anxious for information.

"Say," he once more demanded; "surely there must be some reason why you have to ring that bell?"

The man gave him a furious glance and yelled to those inside the car:

"Thirty-sixth Street!"

The passengers on the platform sniggered.

"Are they afraid you won't know how many fares you take, and that you'll mise collecting some?" said Clint, as innocently as possible.

"Do you want to git off?" snarled the man.

"No, not until my uncle does," pleasantly replied the boy. "You haven't told me why you ring that bell-punch. Ain't it an awful nuisance?"

By that time Mr. Colby had risen from his seat and had noticed the amused look of the passengers and the angry expression of the conductor.

He walked to the rear of the car, and, motioning the man that he did not yet wish to get off, listened.

Clint had no idea how he was hurting his victim's feelings.

In Poquam everybody asked blunt questions and expected direct replies, and he never for a moment suspected the apparatus was designed to check the conductor's dishonesty.

"You're got to punch a hole every time you receive a fare, eh?" said Clint, smiling sweetly in the face of the exasperated man. "Now, do you ever, in the hurry of taking a lot of fares together, forget to use that machine?"

"Forty-ninth!" fairly shrieked the poor fellow, who knew he would be discharged from his position if he struck the inquisitive youth, Mr. Colby being one of the lawyers employed by the company.

"Come, Clint," said his uncle; "we get off here;" then, turning to the conductor, remarked: "You must excuse my nephew; he is from the country, and does not know any better."

"All right, sir," answered the man. "It's hard enough having to use a punch without being asked such questions. I see the young fellow was green."

As the pair turned into Forty-ninth Street, Clint inquired:

"Why did you ask him to excuse me? I thought you said you did not want folks to think I came from Poquam?"

Mr. Colby explained, adding:

"It was lucky the young man did not assault you. For goodness sake, drop asking questions!"

"I didn't know you were listening," said Clint. "I only meant to be civil. Come to think of it, he did get rather red in the face. I won't do it again."

"Please be careful what you say to your aunt," urged his relative. "Just answer, yes or no. She's a very good woman, and I want her to like you. Speak in a low tone. Do not shout as you do to me!"

After walking along several blocks, the lawyer motioned his nephew to ascend the steps of a handsome brown stone house, and having unlocked the door, ushered him into the hall, saying:

"This is my home, Clint. I hope it will long be yours."

In a short time they were joined by a motherly-looking lady, who, after welcoming her husband, said:

"So you are my nephew, Clinton?"

"Yes," he replied, following her into the parlor.

"Is your mother well?" she asked, shaking his hand and motioning him to a seat.

"Yes," he quietly answered.

"Do you like New York, nephew?"

"Yes," almost in a whisper.

"Have you had dinner?"

"Yes," very faintly.

"Would you like to go up to your room?"

"Yes," nodding.

Mrs. Colby's features quivered with merriment, and after a few moments' pause, during which Clint stared hard at the toes of his boots, she inquired, with a sly look at her husband, who was enjoying the fun:

"Cannot you say anything but yes or no, or speak louder?"

Clint's mouth twitched and his eyes blinked, as he shouted, Poquam fashion:

"Guess I can, Aunt Hannah, but uncle told me not to."

"Oh, you can say what you like to me," she observed. "I remember the time when Clinton was just such another as you are."

The boy now felt at his ease, and from that moment the lady became his warm friend, she being vastly amused by the recital of his adventures.

"I suppose you can eat another dinner?" she said.

Clinton guessed he could, and after brushing up a bit, he joined his relatives at the well-furnished table.

He was quick and smart, and soon saw it was incorrect to eat with his knife, and do other things that were not considered vulgar in Poquam.

When the meal was over his aunt said she was going to a reception, and showing him into the library, remarked:

"You will find any quantity of reading here. We shall be late, so when you feel tired you can retire. Good-night."

Clint waited round the apartment and read the titles of a number of volumes, until he heard his friends depart, when, noticing a secretary, he opened it.

The interior was furnished with pigeon-holes, crammed with notes and other documents, on seeing which his eyes sparkled, and he exclaimed:

"Here's a treat! I do so admire reading folks' letters!"

CHAPTER III.

CLINT DISCOVERS A FAMILY SECRET.

OPENING letters addressed to another, or reading such documents without being first requested to do so by the owner, is probably one of the meanest things of which a person can be guilty, yet there are thousands who do not know this, and Clint was one of the number.

The notes were from various friends and acquaintances of his aunt, and as they did not contain anything specially interesting, he soon grew tired of perusing them, and hunted for something more entertaining.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, as he caught sight of a small, morocco-covered book marked "My Journal —Private." "Here's suthin' good, I reckon."

The volume was dated thirty-five years back, and proved to be the diary of his aunt, on the fly-leaf being written:

"This book belongs to

MISS HANNAH RICHARDSON,
SANDY HOLLOW, LONG ISLAND."

Clint carried his prize nearer to the light, and nestling down in a luxurious chair, began to read.

At first the entries were very commonplace. However, after a page or two, he came across something that aroused his curiosity and made his eyes twinkle.

As the reader will probably like to share his discovery, we will give a copy of the entries in question:

"June 31st, 18—. Sam Jones had a fit."

"June 32d, 18—. Saw Charlie Harrison. Told him about Sam Jones. He said he would send me a powder to give Sam that would cure his fits. Charlie is looking elegant. He is at Cook & Wilson's drug-store on Broadway."

Later on was the following:

"August 17th, 18—. Sam grows worse every day, and mother won't hear of his being sent away."

"Some poor relation or another, like me," murmured Clint, as he nervously turned the page. "I've read of exactly such things as this in the New York story-papers. Just fancy, and that woman looks as sweet as candy."

He wiped the clammy perspiration from his forehead, then read:

"August 29th, 18—. Charlie came over for the day. Met me on the street and handed me the medicine. Made me promise I'd give it to Sam myself. I like Charlie; he's always so kind. Gave Sam the powder in some milk. He seemed to like it."

"August 30th, 18—. A dreadful discovery. Poor Sam found dead. I felt awfully bad. Believe it was that powder. Did not dare look old Kate in the face. She told mother she believed he had been poisoned. Everybody in Sandy Hollow talking about it."

"August 31st, 18—. Sam was buried in our family lot, under the trees, in sight of the kitchen-window. Poor Kate took on dreadfully, and hinted I knew more than I cared to say. I own I felt guilty, but would not confess without implicating Charlie Harrison. I hope they won't bury me in the family plot. I'd prefer to be interred in a cemetery."

"This is awful!" groaned Clint, who, by that time, had worked himself into a perfect fever. "My goodness gracious, to think my aunt has married a murderess! Guess I'll read some more."

The next dozen entries described his aunt's visit to New York, among them being this memo:

"Saw Charley. Told him about Sam Jones. He only laughed, and said, 'Wasn't that what you wished?' I told him no, and that it was awfully. He begged me not to betray him, he having done it for my sake, and that Cook & Wilson would make trouble if they heard of his using poison. I promised. Shall never like Charley again. Feel as though I, not he, had murdered poor Sam."

"Poor Sam!" sighed Clint, now fairly bestde himself with indignation. "I here vow never to rest until I have hunted out Mr. Harrison, and compelled him to confess the crime of which he was guilty! I see, she wasn't the one, but the murdered man shall be avenged. I won't tell uncle until everything is ready, then he'll have to know. This book will be good evidence, and by its means and mine that wretch, Harrison, shall be brought to justice. I used to think it was all nonsense when I read about the crimes of New York;" sighing; "now I know them stories were founded on fact."

He carefully copied the entries in his notebook, and returning the diary to its resting-place, closed the secretary.

"I understand," he mused, as he paced the room, "I'm the special instrument selected to expose that dreadful crime. When I was in Poquam I've heard folks say, 'Clint, your confounded inquisitiveness will get you into some awful scrape!' A lot they knew. Nater has given me a desire for knowledge, in order that I might benefit the world. What I have got to do is to be cautious."

As he was thus thinking the door was opened, and in came his relative.

"What, still up!" exclaimed his aunt. "You must have found a very entertaining book!"

"Yess," he replied. "I did."

"You look pale and tired," remarked his uncle. "Go to bed, my boy. To-morrow you shall try your hand at law."

Clint lingered in the room until his aunt had retired, then, approaching his relative, exclaimed, in a low, melodramatic tone:

"Say, if a person caused another person to commit a murder, would the second person have to be hanged for the other person's act, eh?"

Mr. Colby glanced quietly at him and said:

"Why do you ask such a question?"

"Because I want to know all about it!" replied the lad.

"Well, wait until to-morrow and I will give you some volumes of legal opinions bearing on such cases," answered the other. "That is the sort of inquisitiveness will be useful to you! Don't forget what I told you. Drop Poquam ways, and do not ask so many questions, but read and study. You may make something by doing that!"

"Uncle," he significantly observed, "you called me green this morning, didn't you?"

"Well, I believe I did," smilingly replied his relation. "You'll be called that many times before you are convinced of it."

"I ain't what you say; indeed I ain't!" earnestly continued the boy. "I've got a lot of good, common sense—folks allus allows that! I'd like to know what I asked you jes now! S'pose you wanted to put me out of the way, and were to get some one else to give me a dose of suthin', would the person who gave me the stuff be guilty of murder?"

"Not if he were an innocent medium," said Mr. Colby, glancing at Clint's staring eyes and excited features. "Now, you go to bed. What have you been reading?"

"I'll tell you *when the time comes*!" said the boy, with a mysterious gesture; after which he gave his uncle a quick nod and retired.

"Hannah," remarked the lawyer, to his wife, as he wound up the clock in their room, "I can't quite make my nephew out! Was I ever as green as he is?"

"Why do you ask?" she said.

He related his conversation with Clint.

"Oh, he has been reading a dime-novel," she observed. "We must be patient with him. I shall never mind what he says or does."

"Don't be too sure of that," merrily returned her husband. "I'm sorry we didn't take the boy years ago. His Poquam training will give us considerable trouble. I'll keep him in my private office until the hayseed is shaken out of his hair! I wonder what Jarvis will think of him?"

"Jarvis isn't a bad-hearted man," remarked the lady. "Our duty is to help your nephew; and, having neglected him so long, we must expect to pay the penalty."

She was a generous, unsuspicious woman, and never for a moment imagined Clint had been guilty of reading her letters and journal.

That night she lay awake, thinking over his discovery, every now and then muttering to himself:

"Poor Sam Jones! I guess, in her heart, Aunt Hannah feels bad! She'd like to have that Charley Harrison punished! I'll read the law-books, and it I find I can get at him, without touching her, I'll make things lively!"

He dreamed of murder, poison and all manner of things, and when he presented himself at the breakfast-table looked miserable.

"Why, nephew, what is the matter?" demanded his aunt.

"Nothing," he said.

"Here's another extraordinary crime," observed Mr. Colby, glancing up from his newspaper. "Murder will out!"

"Oh," shuddered the lady, nervously spilling some coffee, "as she spoke; "please talk about something else!"

"She quails," thought Clint; "her conscience troubles her. I will find out where Mr. Harrison keeps, tax him with his crime, bring him to justice, and relieve her soul of its agony. She little thinks I know all."

Having thus made up his mind he attacked breakfast with a vigor that delighted his relations.

"I wish I had your excellent appetite," said Mrs. Colby. "There was a time when I enjoyed my food just as you seem to do."

"Perhaps you will again, aunt," he said, as he crammed a buckwheat-cake into his capacious mouth. "Cheer up."

"No," she sighed, "I shall never be what I was."

To the amusement of his relations and the girl who was tending table, Clint closed one eye, swallowed his food with a gulp, and said, in a confidential aside:

"You jes' wait, Aunt Hannah. I'll bring your appetite back. Perhaps I know more than you think," adding, in the same breath, "I'll trouble you for another cup of coffee."

She laughed to that it was with difficulty she could hand the cup to the girl, who snickered outright, while Mr. Colby said:

"I did not know you understood medicine, nephew."

"I'm going to surprise you both," he muttered, helping himself to a round of buttered toast. "Say, what do you pay for bread—eh? Any slum in this? It looks white."

"I'm sure I do not know," answered his convulsed aunt.

"Do uncle keep house?" demanded the boy. "Some of our Poquam men folks provide everything. They cook, wash, iron, and run the entire consarn."

This description of country life was too much for the attendant, who, after vainly endeavoring to stifle her laughter, retired to the pantry.

"Clint," remarked Mr. Colby, "have you forgotten what I told you?"

"How?" innocently ejaculated his nephew.

"What did you tell me?"

"To think before asking an inquisitive question," said the gentleman. "It is no business of yours what we pay for things."

"No offense," muttered Clint. "I only wanted to know, so's when I write mother I kin quote York prices."

"I'll tell you anything in reason," said his aunt. "Your uncle must not be too severe with you."

"Bless you, I don't mind him," he whispered, behind his hand. "I've got his measure to a dot. What I'm worrying about, Aunt Hannah, is you;" adding: "But I'll fix that matter all right. You'll eat a bigger breakfast than I do before long."

The lady sighed, and after gazing at him for a moment, said:

"You're an extraordinary boy!"

"You'll think so when you know everything," he answered, blinking rapidly as he spoke. "Cheer up, aunt; I know more than you imagine."

On their way to the cars Mr. Colby told his nephew that his wife's lack of appetite resulted from grief at the loss of their children, who had all died in infancy.

Clint listened respectfully and thought:

"I know better. She's fretting about that murder. I won't tell you until I've seen Mr. Harrison. You'll be surprised, man, when you learn everything."

Upon arriving at his office, the lawyer introduced his relative to his clerks, after doing which he took him into his private room, and said:

"You can occupy that desk," pointing to one in a corner, "until you get used to things. My partner, Mr. Jarvis, may come in presently. He uses that office beyond; it's locked, now. Mind what you say to him and don't ask any questions. If any peddlers present themselves tell them to clear out."

"Can I have that murder book to read?" inquired his nephew. "I'd like to post myself, you know."

The gentleman smiled, and taking a number of volumes from the bookcase, said:

"There are a few to begin upon. After you have mastered their contents I'll give you some more."

When his uncle had departed, Clint settled himself in the seat, opened a volume and murmured:

"Now for it! Expect I'll get all the law at my fingers' ends, and then I'll terrify out Mr. Harrison."

The book proved to be a work on murder by poisoning, and was so interesting that the lad soon became absorbed in its contents.

While he was thus employed, a meanly-dressed man, carrying a blue bag, entered the room, and after glancing at him, advanced and touched his arm. Clint glanced angrily up, and taking the newcomer for a peddler, cried:

"Here, you clear out of this."

"Eh?" inquired the lawyer, fumbling in his bag, where he always carried the key of his private office, "eh?"

"We never buy of peddlers," said the boy. "We don't want any matches, mucilage or soap. With which he rose, took the astonished old gentleman by the coat, and pushing him out into the entry, shouted: "Now, you jes' git! I'm studying up murder cases."

CHAPTER IV.

JOHN JARVIS.

THE little old man did not take his eviction quietly, but raising his bag aloft, delivered a swinging blow that knocked Clint sprawling against the door of the clerk's office.

Out came the young men, wondering what the trouble was about.

"Who is that?" panted the pugnacious individual, pointing to the boy. "Is he in his right senses?"

"He is Mr. Colby's nephew," replied the chief clerk.

"Say," ejaculated Clint, rising and rubbing his head, "who are you, mister?"

"I'm John Jarvis," sourly answered the old gentleman, marching back into the office and proceeding to open the door of his private room.

"I took him for a match-peddler," said the amazed lad, addressing the grinning clerks. "Is that really Mr. Jarvis? I want to know."

"You had better go and apologize to him," whispered one.

"Yes," suggested another; "do it right off before your uncle comes back."

"I'll fix him," said the boy. "Much obliged to you fellers; I kin take care of myself."

The clerks retired to their den, leaving the door between the offices open, so that they could hear the fun.

Mr. Jarvis was one of those men who know or care very little about anything out of their profession.

He and Mr. Colby had studied law together, had passed at the same time and drifted into a partnership, beyond which they had nothing in common.

Clint's uncle was a big-hearted, generous man.

Jarvis was as mean as he could be.

When Clint entered the old fellow's office, Jarvis was munching a roll, bought on his way down-town, that being his usual break-fast.

He glanced at the intruder and growled:

"Well?"

"I've come to talk with you 'bout my mistake in taking you for a peddler," began the lad, as pleasantly as possible.

"Do I look at all like a peddler?" snapped Jarvis, turning squarely upon his visitor.

He had no idea how shabby his coat was, or how moldy he looked in general.

Like all men of his class, he believed the world at large recognized his ability, little thinking it was known only to a few, and that the rest of mankind valued him by the quality of his dress.

When he asked Clint if the latter thought he resembled a peddler, the boy forgot all about his uncle's warning, and replied, in his blunt, country fashion:

"Wal, if you want to know the truth, you do."

"Eh?" cried Jarvis. "You're the first person who has ever thought so."

"You mean *said* so," answered Clint.

The old gentleman peered at him from under his bushy eyebrows, and after swallowing the last morsel of the roll said, in a dry, sarcastic, quiet tone:

"In what do I resemble a peddler?"

Clint did not know he was exasperating him. He was asked a plain question, and naturally thought he ought to give a plain, direct answer.

Taking a chair opposite the old man he coolly surveyed him from head to foot, then said:

"Wal, your clothes look mighty shiny."

"You think so, eh?" growled Jarvis, growing red in the face.

"Oh, I don't think nothing about it," chuckled Clint; "I kin see that plain enough. S'pose you don't git as much of the profit of this business as uncle, eh? He wears good clothes; nobody would take him for a gum-peddler."

"So you're my partner's nephew, are you?" slowly remarked the now thoroughly exasperated lawyer. "You're his nephew, are you?"

"Yes," nodded the boy; "folks down to Poquam say I'm the double of him."

"Shall I tell you what I consider you?" continued the old fellow, lowering at the lad as he spoke. "Would you like to have my opinion of you?"

Clint had been jocosely told by his uncle that lawyers always charge for their opinions, so he cautiously replied:

"I don't want to pay for it."

This touched the miser, and in a moment his anger vanished. Had Clint replied, like most boys, Jarvis would probably have said something very harsh, and ordered him out of his office. As it was, he first smiled, then chuckled, and finally laughed outright—a thing he had not done for years.

Clint sat and wondered at this exhibition, and when Jarvis calmed down, naively inquired:

"You seem tickled, Mister?"

"I like you," said the old man. "You're green, but you're honest."

"Never stole anything in my life," returned the boy. "As to being green, guess you was once, weren't you?"

"Yes, yes," nodded Jarvis. "I was probably as verdant as you are, though that was a long, long time ago; a very long time ago."

"You look old," said Clint, growing bolder as the other became more genial. "Guess, though you don't dress well, like uncle, you've got stamps, eh?"

"He, he, he!" snickered Jarvis.

"Laugh away," good-humoredly continued the lad. "You've got a hard knock on the head with your bag, but I didn't mind that. Won't you shake hands?"

"Yes, yes," said the miser, extending his bony paw. "I forgive you for turning me out of my office. He, he, he!"

The matter now being amicably settled, Clint thought it a good opportunity to ask his new acquaintance about the law concerning murder.

He had wrestled with the volumes given him to read by his uncle, and though at first interested, had become so confused that his mind was, to use his own expression, all of a heap.

Jarvis having been away for some days, had nothing to call him to the courts; besides which he felt an interest in his new acquaintance, so he sat, picked the crumbs out of the paper in which his roll had been wrapped, and listened to the long string of questions propounded by inquisitive Clinton.

As he never for a moment thought the boy had any reason for his queries beyond a mere desire for information, he gave his answers at random, from time to time referring him to various legal works, the names of which Clint duly noted in the back of an envelope.

After the inquirer's demands had been satisfied, Jarvis said: "So you're going to study law?"

"Yes," nodded his visitor. "I want to learn all I can, so that hyperby I can keep mother same as you do yours."

This hit Jarvis in the tender spot, he having permitted his aged parent to die almost in want; however, he merely observed:

"Well, I think in time you'll learn."

"Yes," nodded the boy. "Some people think I'm green, but I'm smarter than I look. What I want is experience." Then lowering his voice, he added, "I'm going to surprise you in a little while."

"How?" was the amused rejoinder.

"You just wait," said the lad, with a mysterious air. "I am one of those boys who can put two and two together, I tell you."

"Clint," presently remarked Jarvis, "I believe I can put you in the way of earning a lot of money."

"Oh, I'd admire to do it," cried the boy. "I hope it's to find out suthin'. I'd like to be employed as a detective."

"Just so," replied the lawyer. "I understand you perfectly. We have a client who has lately lost his father."

"Yes," eagerly answered the boy; "I un'stan'. Old man died suddenly—yes. Go on; somebody pisoned him?"

"No," answered Jarvis. "He died a natural death, and when the family assembled to hear the will read the document was missing, and the housekeeper and her husband, who are both as deaf as posts, profess not to know where it is."

Here he paused and glanced at Clint, who sat listening with his ears, mouth, eyes and nostrils wide open.

"Please go on," he murmured. "This is terrible interesting!"

"You see," said Jarvis, in a lower tone, "until we can find that will our client cannot get his share of the property, which is considerable. His brothers and sisters are not friendly to him, as it is known the father intended to bequeath the best part of the estate to the young man. We've sent detectives, and all manner of spies, down to watch the housekeeper and her husband, though none of them have managed to learn anything. Now, it occurs to me, you would be the very person for that matter!"

"I'd *love* to go!" excitedly exclaimed the boy. "I un'stan' jes' what you want! I won't talk about this: my other affair can wait."

"What other affair?" demanded Jarvis.

"Oh, a little private one—nothing particular," he stammered. "I'll attend to this first. I know jes' how you wish to have it done! I've read of such things in books. I can disguise myself."

"Clint," quietly returned the other, "don't imagine you're going to play the part of a detective! We have never for an instant imagined those old people know where that will is hidden. What I want you to do is to go and live with them; cut wood, fetch water, and do their chores, and, by questioning them in your country fashion, learn the old man's habits. They get hurried when we talk to them and lose their wits."

"I see," drawled the boy, not quite pleased to find his romantic ideas of being required to disguise himself as a detective thus rudely dispelled. "I un'stan'! You want me to go and live with them as a hired boy?"

"Yes," answered the crafty old lawyer. "You won't have to work very hard; there are only two of them to look after."

"Wal, I found it pooty tough sawin' wood and doing chores to hum!" said Clint, who thought of his elegantly furnished room at his uncle's, and of the style in which his relatives lived. "Work's work, you know!"

"I suppose you would not mind earning a thousand dollars?" significantly remarked the other.

"How much?" ejaculated the amazed boy.

Mr. Jarvis repeated the amount, adding:

"Our client will not only pay that sum but will be your friend for life! Come, let me speak to your uncle about this! You're the very person to find out where the missing document is hidden!"

"Can I be sartin of getting that money?" demanded Clint. "I'd powerful like to earn such a pile for mother."

"Yes," nodded the other. "You seem to think a good deal of your parent."

"Bet you I do!" he cried, the tears starting to his eyes. "If you knew Mrs. Lee you'd talk for her pooty strong. She's struggled hard enuff to raise me. I own I don't want to give up my new home at uncle's—but"—with trembling voice—"if I kin earn anything for her, I'll go. You know, last night when I was awake thinking, it 'peared mighty mean of me to be lying on a soft bed, covered up with beautiful blankets, when she has only a cornhusk mattress and two old quilts. You'd do as much for your mother, wouldn't you?"

Jarvis flushed, for he remembered the way in which he had treated his parent.

"My mother is dead," he muttered. "I've no relatives."

"I'm sorry for you, mister," innocently replied Clint. "Now I know why you wear such greasy-looking clothes. You ain't got any one to keep you smart."

"Never mind my clothes!" snapped the old man; adding, as Mr. Colby entered the outer office: "Here comes your uncle. I'll chat this matter over with him."

"I see you've made Mr. Jarvis's acquaintance," observed the gentleman referred to, as he hung his hat on the stand.

"Yes," said Clint, rising. "We began it rather comically. I took him for a peddler."

"Never mind about that," remarked the elder lawyer. "You go into the other office while I have a talk with your relative."

"What is it, John?" asked Mr. Colby, as he joined the old gentleman.

"Close the door, Clinton," quietly responded Jarvis. "I've something important to consult you about."

The lawyer did as he was requested, and taking a seat near the other's desk, said:

"Well, what is it, John?"

Jarvis related what had passed between himself and the boy, concluding his statement with:

"Now, don't interpose a lot of objections. He's just the one we want. He'll earn a thousand dollars, and we shall win our case and pocket heavy fees."

They little thought the lad had his ear glued to the keyhole of the door.

He did not know this was a mean act, having seen numbers of persons do it at Poquam.

"I'm afraid he'll make a mess of it," said Mr. Colby.

The words had scarcely passed his lips ere the door was slowly opened, and his nephew, thrusting in his head, exclaimed:

"Don't you worry, uncle. I'll find that will."

"Clinton," sternly demanded his relative, "have you been listening?"

The boy chuckled, as though thinking the question a good joke, then replied:

"Listening? Suttenly I hev; I shouldn't have known it I hadn't."

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH CLINT MAKES A DISCOVERY.

"HE'LL do," said Jarvis. "If he can't find what we want we may as well give up the case."

"Guess you may," said Clint. "Uncle, what makes you look so sour?"

"I detest listening," answered Mr. Colby. "It is one of the meanest acts of which any person can be guilty."

"Mother didn't think so, anyhow," cheerfully observed the boy. "When folks were coming to see us she'd allus say, 'Now, Clint, listen; but don't ask forty million questions.'"

His manner was so comical that his relative was obliged to smile.

"There are two kinds of listeners," he said; "one who keeps open their ears for information——"

"That's me," complacently nodded Clint. "I allus like to know all about things."

"He's right," chuckled Jarvis. "The boy don't intend to pry; it's his nature to. He'll do, Clinton."

"Pry!" ejaculated the amazed lad. "I want to know, uncle. Why, you never for a moment took me for a pol-pry, did you?"

"Yes, I did," said the gentleman. "I wish you to know that it is a despicable trait in any one's character to be guilty of prying and peeking when the persons they watch are unaware of being spied on. Of course, we make use of detectives, though, at the same time, I despise them."

"Then why employ such persons?" bluntly asked the boy. "What would you lawyers do without them?"

Mr. Colby bit his lips and glanced at his partner, who was laughing as though he would shake to pieces.

He had given utterance to a very fine sentiment, but there it had ended.

Clint saw he was puzzled to reply, so went on:

"I'm afraid, uncle, you don't un'stan' me rightly. I ain't one of your meddlesome sort, like Miss Hen

STORIES OF BRUTE INTELLIGENCE.—A DOG BURIES A BUNCH OF KEYS IN THE GROUND FOR SAFE-KEEPING.

Parsons. I don't go poking an' sniffin' round, hunting things that don't consarn me. If I want to know about a matter I own I—well, listen. Still, I don't think you ought to call me a pol-pry."

"Well, I take that back," good-naturedly answered his relative. "I suppose we, none of us, know our own faults. You shall try your hand at finding the will, and if you succeed, I'll send you to some institution where you'll be taught different from what you have been."

Clint's idea of an institution was confined to a reformatory for boys, about which he had heard some terrible stories, so he said, in his sharp, decisive way:

"See here, uncle, I'm no thief! If you mean to put me into that place you mention I'll go home. You said you'd get me a position! Let me try my hand at finding that will, and if I succeed, teach me your business. I can get on with Mr. Jarvis first rate."

Mr. Colby thought a while; then, after explaining what he had meant, said:

"I want to make a man of you, Clint, to teach you what is honest and fair. You may try your hand, as you call it, at finding the will, though I doubt if you will succeed. Mr. Jarvis tells me the old people require a boy to do chores and sleep in the house, and he thinks, if you go there and offer yourself, they will accept you and you will obtain some clue that will lead to the discovery of the missing document."

"Jes' so," murmured the lad. "I'm burning to start."

"I dislike the idea of your peeping and listening," continued the gentleman.

"It's nice," grinned the boy. "I tell you it's jes' like hunting. I'll keep my ears and eyes open and find out what you want. Jes' fancy! If I succeed I'll send mother money enough to pay all her bills and live without worrying for ever so long."

"You can leave us now," said his uncle. "I have to consult Mr. Jarvis before I return to the court. Don't listen in this office any more. I object to it."

"All right," said Clint, and away he went to resume his reading.

After the door was closed Mr. Colby said:

"John, it's a shame to increase that boy's inquisitiveness. He means well, but his desire to know everything amounts to a positive disease."

"Pooh!" returned the other. "I recollect the time when you were just such another, Clinton. He'll pry too closely into something after a while, and get hoisted. He's just the sort of person we want, and it would be folly not to use his talent."

"Very well," said his partner. "Perhaps he may, he'll some day pry into the wrong secret and receive a lesson that will benefit him. He's awfully plain-spoken, and says some very unpleasant things—does he not?"

"Yas," drawled Jarvis. "Clinton, do you think my clothes look shiny?"

"I do, John," quietly answered the other. "Of course it's none of my business how you dress, though I believe, if you were not so shabby, it would be better for both of us. There are many persons who would consult you were your costume more—more—less greasy," adding, as if sorry he had spoken about it, "I suppose that nephew of mine has been giving you his opinion?"

"Ye-as," coldly replied Jarvis, rubbing his hands until the joints snapped. "Clinton, that boy has more plain common sense than you give him credit for. I'll buy a new suit; people shan't think I'm greasy."

"But, John," interposed his partner, "I didn't wish to hurt your feelings, and am sorry he has done so."

The old miser's face twisted into a smile as he observed:

"Children and fools speak the truth! Clinton Colby, I like that nephew of yours, and if he don't suit you I'll adopt him."

"You?" exclaimed his partner.

"Ye-as," said Jarvis. "Nearly everybody one meets, nowadays, is a knave or an idiot—that lad is honest, and," smiling, "as cute as a tin-peddler. I'm going to take him in hand!"

"We'll both do our best for him," remarked Mr. Colby, who was pleased to find some sort of feeling in the heart of his associate. "As to his future—if he behaves himself—he will be my heir."

After chatting a while on some other business, Clint's uncle quitted the office, and as he passed through the room where the boy was seated, said to him:

"I have agreed to your being employed in the matter of finding the Biggleswade will! Now, be cautious, and, above all, do not descend to meanness in obtaining information."

"There's nothing mean about *me*, sir!" cheerfully answered the lad. "I un'stan'! You object to any one telling an untruth—*so do I!*"

"Is my sister in want?" continued his relative, placing his hand on Clint's shoulder. "I have, for many years, been so taken up with my profession that I almost forgot her. Do you think a little money would be of service to your parent?"

"I don't *think* anything about it—I *know* it would," said the boy. "She works dreffle hard, at mat-making, and owes two or three bills; one for the doctor who attended me when I was sick; but don't you send her any money for charity; she'd die before she took it. She told me not to ask for anything for her."

"I understand," quietly replied the other, opening his wallet and taking out a fifty-dollar bill. "There is something in advance for you in the Biggleswade business. You can either put it in the savings bank or spend it."

He brushed away a tear as he spoke, and, returning his purse to his pocket, quitted the office, without saying another word.

Clint sat and stared at the bill, presently murmuring:

"And mother used to tell folks you were hard-hearted!"

"Here," said Mr. Jarvis, opening the door of his office, "come, I want to give you instructions about the Biggleswade matter."

The boy pocketed the money, and rejoining his new friend, said:

"I'm all ready, sir."

"You'll go at once—that is, within an hour," said Jarvis. "Here are tickets for the ferry and steamer. Inquire your way, and keep your business to yourself. On arriving at Sandy Hollow——"

"Sandy Hollow?" exclaimed the lad. "You don't say!"

"Yes, ever been there?" queried the lawyer.

"Wal, no, but I want to go powerful bad," said Clint.

"Why?" demanded the suspicious old man.

"That's my affair," naively answered the boy. "You said I was to keep my business to myself; I kin do it."

Jarvis understood it was useless to question him, so after giving Clint directions how to find the farm, where the old folks still resided, he said:

"Go to Sandy Hollow and ask for Mrs. Ketchum—old Kate, they call her. Say you want a place, and that I sent you. If she likes you, write to me, and I'll have your clothes forwarded."

"Hadn't I better send for my trunks and shift my

STORIES OF BRUTE INTELLIGENCE.—A DOG INVEIGLES ANOTHER ONE INTO THE BUSHES WHILE HE GETS A MEAL.

things?" suggested the lad. "It's at the express office. They'll never engage me if I'm rigged up fine, like this."

"That's so," mused the old gentleman. "I suppose Mr. Colby bought you that outfit?"

Clint nodded and said:

"If you want one like it you can get it at Snipper & Clipps, on Broadway. This cost sixteen dollars."

Jarvis did not reply, though he made up his mind to treat himself to a similar suit.

"I want to go to the express office," continued the other. "I'll take out my working clothes and some things, and send my trunk to uncle's. I don't propose to stay very long, doing chores for those folks."

"That's good," mumbled the lawyer. "Have you any money?"

"Yes, enough for my expenses."

"All right," said Jarvis. "The sooner you begin your search the better. Never mind what your uncle said about listening and peeping. Find out where the will is, and when you know, do not touch it, but come right here and tell us."

Clint nodded and started for the express office.

"Say," he remarked to a clerk, "I want my trunk and I want to send some money. Can you change a fifty dollar bill?"

The man asked him how he obtained it, and sent to Mr. Colby to ascertain if the boy's story was correct, on finding which he gave him the amount in small bills, remarking:

"We're obliged to be particular, you know."

"I ain't mad," said Clint. "Now, can you give me a scrap of paper?"

When he received this he wrote:

NEW YORK, May 3d, 18—.

"MOTHER—This money, forty-eight dollars, was honestly come by, so you may take it without worrying. Uncle has advanced it to me on account of a job. New York is the place. I've already discovered one murder, and am now going to find a will. You used to say my inquisitiveness would be my ruin, but I believe it will make my fortune. If all goes well, I'll send you a big sum soon—that is, if I find this will. I'm getting on first-class, and am going to learn the lawyering business, though I can't find out how they get their money. Aunt Hannah is pretty well, but frets considerable. However, I am going to fix that matter.

"CLINTON LEE."

It will be seen by the foregoing that Clint did not express his affection by calling his mother "dear," spite of which he would have died for her.

Poquava people were not sentimental. Life to them was a hard fight, and they had no time for the more tender passions.

When Mrs. Lee took leave of her son she had not kissed him or shed any tears, while he, though he felt a terrible choking sensation, merely nodded and said:

"Good-by. I'll write. Take care of yourself."

He inclosed the note with the money in an envelope, which he addressed to his parent, after which he obtained his working clothes.

The good-natured clerk permitted him to change his costume in a private room.

"You'll send that letter, with the bills, to mother, and my trunk to uncle's, eh, mister?" he inquired, as he received the receipt.

"Yes," was the response; "they'll go all right; you need have no fear."

Clint walked down to the ferry, and crossing to Long Island, took the cars for Babylon, the nearest station to Sandy Hollow.

After a pleasant walk, which occupied nearly an hour, he arrived at his destination—a rambling old farm-house.

The door was answered by an aged woman, to whom he shouted his business.

She looked him all over, and having summoned her husband, who was lame, talked about him as though he were deaf, or had no feelings.

"It was very amusing to hear them address each other."

"He'll not rob us, eh?" roared the old man.

"He looks honest!" screamed the woman.

"Yes, Kate," shouted the man, "he looks honest, but you can't always tell."

"Shall we hire him?" she bawled.

"Ask him what wages he wants," roared Ketchum.

"Oh, I ain't going to give more'n two dollars a month and his keep," she said. "Will that suit you, boy?"

Clint nodded, and after answering some very personal questions, was told to consider himself engaged. He was set to work right away at sawing wood, and kept at it until supper-time.

When the meal was over, Kate ordered him to wash up the dishes, then retired with her husband to the parlor, the door of which was left ajar.

Clint finished his chores, and hearing the old people in earnest conversation, crept to the door.

There was a wide space between the latter and the jamb, it being hung on old-fashioned hinges.

The boy poked his nose into this, and listened with open mouth and ears.

"Seven, eight, and half-past struck; still the pair talked on, conversing about matters that were Greek to the watcher, who, mute as an Indian, remained steadily at his post.

As nine o'clock rang out the old man turned to his wife and shouted:

"I've got it, Kate. Guess I know where that is."

You might have heard the lad's heart beat, so excited was he.

"Now for it," he thought, as he inserted his nose further into the crack. "I knew I should learn this way."

[To be continued.]

STORIES OF BRUTE INTELLIGENCE.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us the following account of the intelligent doings at some remarkably wise animals of his acquaintance: In my family we had a tabby-cat who, when turned out, would let herself in at another door by climbing up some lint nailed round it, then pressing up the thumb-latch, pushing the door, with herself hanging on it, away from the post, so as to prevent the latch falling back into its place, and then dropping down and walking back to the fire.

I knew a Skye terrier who, being told to carry a fishing rod, carefully experimented along its length, to find its centre of gravity. In carrying it, he came to a narrow path through a wood. There dropping the rod, he took it by the end, and dragged it under him lengthwise till the open road was gained, when he took the rod by the centre of gravity again, and went on. This could not be a copy of human actions, but the result of original reasoning.

Another writer gives the following on the authority of the late Mr. Dawes, the astronomer: "Being busy in his garden, and having a large bunch of keys in his hand, he gave it to a retriever to hold for him till he was at liberty. Going into the house soon after, he forgot to reclaim the keys. The remembrance of what he had done with them only returned to him when he required them in the evening.

STORIES OF BRUTE INTELLIGENCE.—HOW A CAT MANAGED TO UNLATCH AND OPEN A DOOR.

He then recalled that he had given them to the dog, and forgotten to take them again. Calling the animal, and looking impressively in his face, he said: 'My keys! fetch me my keys.'"

The dog looked wistful and puzzled for a moment, and then bounded off to the garden, his master following. He went straight to the root of an apple-tree, scratched up the keys, and brought them. May we not fairly put into words the dog's train of reasoning there?

"My master has given me these keys to hold; he has forgotten them; I cannot carry them all day; but I must put them in safety where I can find them again."

A terrier-like dog named Uglymug had a poodle for companion. Whenever Uglymug saw signs of a family meal, he inveigled the poodle into a labyrinthine shrubbery under pretense of seeking for rats, and when the latter was fairly intent on its game, Uglymug would sneak back to enjoy by himself what he could get from the family table.

STORIES OF BRUTE INTELLIGENCE.—HOW A DOG MANAGED TO CARRY A FISHING-ROD THROUGH THE WOODS.

THE JANITOR'S BOY.

A STORY OF NEW YORK.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IF Mr. Dunman had any notion of ever returning to anybody the money he had "borrowed" in such a remarkable way from Madderley's envelope, he had not as yet mentioned it. In fact, he had need of all the money he could get hold of.

Not that he had lost by his varied speculations, for it seemed, on the contrary, as if he took hold of the winning side of everything.

Whatever he touched, during those hot Summer weeks, seemed to turn to money in his hands, and no man walked the street with a look of more perfect self-confidence.

In spite of his secrecy, however, it began to be rumored that Dunman had been very successful.

"Made a fine thing in cotton."

"Splendid turn in tobacco."

"Did you know that Dunman was a heavy holder of wheat when the price went up? Scored a handsome thing, now, I tell you."

His stock transactions were more easily concealed, but one or two of Mr. Pennerby's old friends, who had occasion to write to him, thought it worth their while to congratulate him on having so very long-headed a business partner.

"Safe man, too, though he can take a risk now and then."

And that kind of praise set the cautious old merchant to thinking, and his thoughts grew upon him, day by day, until they began to interfere with the comfort and enjoyment of his vocation.

"I've every reason to trust him, and I never knew him to speculate, but just as good men as he is have gone to ruin that way."

Dunman would have laughed at the suggestion that he was in any kind of danger. His bank account looked too well for that. And yet he was spreading further and further, and it required a larger amount of money, all the while, to handle his very heavy operations.

"Might lose on some of them," he frankly admitted to himself, "but I'm not likely to on all. You don't catch me putting all my eggs into one basket."

No, but all his baskets were in one wagon, so to speak, and now and then a whole wagon load gets dumped at once by some unlooked-for overset.

"I think, if I get through what I'm doing now, I'll hold on a while," he said to himself, one day. "But I must have a few thousands more, or I may get in a tight place."

It was that very evening that Mr. Squam had a satisfactory call from his down-town client, and was permitted to retain what he deemed "good security" for a loan, with a fair hope of being able to lend more in a similar manner. "I lend you all you vant, Mr. Dunman. It is good for you to make some moneys, but I like to get hold of some of dem myself."

But if Dunman imagined Mr. Squam's sagacity at fault concerning him, he was mistaken. The old money-lender did not have that hooked nose and those piercing black eyes for nothing, and he had supplied funds to heavy operators before that day.

"I most vatch him close," he said to himself. "I shall take noting from him but good security."

And that was just what Mr. Dunman was ready to give, whether it came from his own sale or not.

Very good security, or at least he thought so, and he only regretted the necessity of paying Squam such high interest.

The Summer was drawing nearer to its close now, and it would be necessary to have everything wound up before the return of old Mr. Ponnerby.

It would not be possible to offer an excuse for remaining in town after that, and yet things had got into such a shape latterly that it seemed unwise to move too fast. The markets were a little "shaky" all around, and Dunman waited and waited in the hope of seeing them take a better turn.

He had not the slightest idea that anybody was watching him, but Phil Hawkins and Sile Morgan had not concealed from one another their observations.

"He's been wonderfully quiet and thoughtful in the office, lately."

"Sometimes he gets into a regular brown study."

"Something's troubling him."

"Well, you know what all the market reports say."

"He doesn't write much about them to Mr. Ponnerby. I see all the letters that go into the copy-book."

"What ought we to do, Phil?"

"Nothing, Sile. We don't know a thing; we only guess. We can't move on a mere guess."

"Of course we can't, but I do hope nothing's going wrong with Mr. Dunman. I like him."

So did everybody else, especially Vandy MacNamara, but the Janitor's Boy was also set to thinking that evening.

Twice, of late, he had been sent up to old Squam's with sealed messages, and both times he had been asked to come in and take a seat. Not in Squam's own "den," indeed, but in a front room that might have been intended for a parlor, but was not a very magnificent one.

On this very day, after Phil and Sile had gone home, Mr. Dunman remained in his office till after five o'clock, going over again and again several complicated sets of figures.

They had not seemed to please him at all, but at last he put them aside and took up a large letter envelope which lay beside him.

"I must hold on. It won't do to be closed out at these prices. Why, it would wipe me out, and more, too. There must come a change for the better in a day or two."

And, so saying, he walked out and whistled for Vandy.

And Vandy was there, for earlier in the day he had promised to be, and he found himself taking an unusual degree of interest in the affairs of Mr. Dunman. He received his errand in silence.

"Don't go till after supper, and then come to my house with the answer. I'll be there."

"All right, sir."

Vandy had meant to spend the evening at Mother Bounce's, for he and Clip had arranged a trip to Coney Island next day, and a grand time on the seashore.

It was hard to give it up, but he said nothing about it, and was at Squam's door in due time.

The money-lender opened it himself, as usual.

"Come in. Come right in!" he exclaimed, in a hard, husky voice, as he led the way to that dingy room of his, which Vandy had never entered before.

He tore open the letter as he did so, and took from it several slips of paper and a note in Dunman's handwriting.

"So! Dis is vell. I keep dem. He vants ten thousand more, but he must gif security. You dake him back dese oder tings. Dell him dey are not goot. De bank say so." Dey sted Mr. Ponnerby's own name on dem, not dat of Ponnerby & Co. Ven he make dem good I let him haf some more moneys. He fool me not. I lose nothing by him."

Perhaps, that is, if the new security were any better than the old; but Vandy knew that the papers he was receiving were very valuable, and he could not help understanding that Mr. Dunman had no right to borrow money on them, for they were not his.

There was but one thing for Vandy to do, and that was to hurry to Dunman's lodgings as fast as he could with Squam's unpleasant message.

It was not a very easy one to deliver, and Vandy was scarcely surprised at seeing how pale grew the face of the junior partner of Ponnerby & Co. while he was giving it. But Dunman's nerves were good ones, and he merely said:

"All right; I'll fix him. Be at the office in the morning, Vandy; I may want you."

Vandy thought of Clip and Coney Island, but he walked out without mentioning them, leaving behind him a white-faced man, who sank into a chair the moment the door was closed.

"What shall I do now? Why, if I can't get around this I am ruined for life!"

Terrible words for a man to say, and yet Vandy MacNamara had already seen as much in his eyes, without a word said.

It set his young brain in a terrible whirl, too, and the thought came to him:

"If Ponnerby were here he might do something. If he only knew!"

He was on the sidewalk then, and right there before him were Phil and Sile, just come out of the latter's boarding-house.

HOW THE GIRAFFE IS HUNTED.—SEE PAGE 342.

It seemed as if the words rose to Vandy's lips without any will of his own, in answer to Phil Hawkins.

"Hello, Vandy? Been running more errands for Dunman?"

"That's my business, Phil, but if I were old Ponnerby I'd wasn't to be in town to-morrow."

"What do you mean, Vandy?"

"Just what I say, and I'm half-sorry I said it. Won't say any more. Good-evening."

And he hurried away, while Phil and Sile were looking at one another.

It was just what they had been talking about, and Phil exclaimed:

"Come on, Sile; I must see my father about this. He'll know what to do."

He did, indeed, when he heard all his son and Sile Morgan had to tell him, and his hat was on his head and he was in a telegraph office wonderfully soon.

That evening, as old Mr. Ponnerby sat with his wife and some friends in the balcony of a watering-place hotel, a dispatch was handed him.

He opened it and read it.

"What is it, my dear?"

"Nothing, much, Mrs. Ponnerby. Matter of business."

But he handed it to her, and she read it, and they were in their own room before a great while.

"Shall you go, dear?"

"Certainly. Hawkins knows what he's about, perfectly. The train goes at nine. Bring me in at a good hour in the morning. I'd be a fool to disregard a plain warning. Especially after all my doubts."

"Why, what do you think it is?"

"Something's wrong with Dunman. Phil has told his father, as he ought, and Hawkins says I must come home and take care of myself. Plain as the nose on my face. I'll go to Hawkins at once when I get there."

"Oh, my dear, it's dreadful."

"May be, may be not. Know in twelve hours, or twenty."

But old Mr. Ponnerby was not the only human being to receive a warning that night.

Mother Bounce was standing at her corner, after the somewhat late arrival of Vandy with his sad doubts concerning the trip to Coney Island, when who should stop and lean toward her but the trusty Denis!

"Have ye heard, Mrs. Bounce?"

"Heard what?"

"Thim two stewards. They've confessed a hape o' things. I'm off while my chance is good."

"Sure an' they've nothin' agin a poor lone woman."

"Haven't they? Well, I'll be yer friend, Mrs. Bounce. If I were you I'd not be too easy found to-morrow; nor old Garcia, neither, though it's little I care for him."

"Oh, the day!"

"It's no use whinin'."

Nor was it, and when Mrs. Bounce had listened to further particulars given her by Denis her mouth closed like a steel-trap. Even when she went upstairs she did not utter a word to Vandy or Clip that seemed unusual.

It may be her granddaughter thought her more than commonly affectionate when she said good-night, but Mrs. Bounce was no weak or hesitating person.

Her mind was settled in an instant as to what she meant to do, and possibly she may have had thoughts of some such matter before that day.

At all events, there were several little packages removed from her room that night, and Vandy went home with a queer, parting message to think over.

"Vandy, me b'ye, if I should iver be missin' for a few days, don't ye be worried. I'm able to take the good care of mesilf. Be good to Clip, Vandy. Not a word. I'll say no more. Go, now, Vandy."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ALL the business part of "down-town" was astir at an uncommonly early hour next morning.

Not that men knew or cared anything about Dunman's troubles, but that they had gone home the previous evening with a very general feeling that there was a financial storm coming.

Men who were accustomed to read the signs of the times had spoken one little word only too plainly.

"There will be a panic to-morrow!"

So they had said, and that was one way to bring on that sort of thing, even if there had not been other and more powerful reasons for its coming.

So everybody wanted to be on hand and see it come, and take part in the furious excitement of it.

Curious, when they could all have saved so much money if they had all staid at home, saying:

"No, we won't have any panic."

You could almost feel it in the air as you walked the street, and when Dunman entered his office he thought he could read it in the silent, anxious faces of Phil Hawkins and Sile Morgan.

"It'll be a bad day, boys—"

But at that moment a man came hurrying in with some papers in his hand.

"Mr. Squam! Good-morning."

"It is not a good morning. I haf made up my mind, Mr. Dunman, dat dis note vill not do. I most haf good security."

Dunman's nerves were strong in an instant, as he closed his hand on the slips of paper.

"Very well. Ponnerby & Co.'s notes with my indorsement, are as good as the gold."

And as he spoke he swiftly tore them into small pieces, which he scattered broadcast through the nearest open window.

"Vat for you do dat? Dey are mine till I haf security."

"No, they're not. I asked you for an advance on them. Only half their value, and you refused, but you had no right to keep them."

"But I send you back de oder security by your boy."

"You had a perfect right to do that, and I have returned the bonds to their owner."

"I vant dem! You owe me dwenty tousend dollar, besides de interest, and I haf no security."

"Certainly not. You returned it to me of your own accord."

"But vat shall I do? I most haf de security or de moneys dis very day."

"Not to-day you won't. It looks like a panic, and I am hard up. My notes to you are not due, and I refuse to meet your views."

So calmly and firmly did the words come from Mr. Dunman's white lips. He had made a swift calculation as he spoke that Mr. Squam's twenty thousand, with Madderley's money, would about cover his losses beyond his own money and his profits, and leave him square with "the street."

But if he was calm, so was not the money-lender, and yet Mr. Squam could scarcely speak, so intense was his anger and disappointment. He was just growling "Good security" again, when another man darkened the doorway of that private office.

"Good-morning, Mr. Dunman."

"Mr. Ponnerby! My dear sir, I'm glad to see you. Just got in?"

"Just in, Dunman. What does all this mean?"

"A little matter of my own, Mr. Ponnerby. Leave the office, Mr. Squam."

"But de security?"

"Leave the office; I won't be bothered with you. When your money is due you may come and see me about it. Get along, now."

If he could not speak before, Squam could scarcely breathe now, but he mechanically obeyed, for there was something almost menacing in Dunman's manner.

"Again I ask, Mr. Dunman, what does all this mean?"

"Mr. Ponnerby, have you not heard that there is a panic? If you have not, I have. I have ordered every one of my operations closed up at once, no matter how much I lose. It will be worse before night."

"You admit, then, that you have been operating?"

"No use in denying it, if I wanted to, but you will lose nothing. My share in this business will protect you. I have not used the name of the firm."

That was scarcely true, but Mr. Squam's refusal had made it a little so. Even Ponnerby could but admire Dunman's coolness.

"Are you losing much?"

"Somewhere near two hundred thousand dollars, as near as I can figure."

"You don't say so! Tell me all about it. It's awful!"

"The worst of it is that I shall lose your confidence, Mr. Ponnerby."

"Sorry to say it, Dunman, but you've done that. The firm of Ponnerby & Co. is dissolved."

Dunman staggered.

He had expected some such thing, but it was terrible to have the fact strike him in the face like that.

"Mr. Ponnerby, you will, of course, take charge at once. I must go out and attend to my affairs."

"Go, then. Sorry for you."

And Dunman went, but the moment he reached the street he straightened up and assumed a cast iron smile. He did not mean his face should tell of his ruin to every man he met.

Vandy saw him go, but he had also seen Mr. Ponnerby enter, and he thought he understood the matter pretty well.

Just then he felt himself pulled by the sleeve, and turned to look into the face of Señor Garcia.

"I have no time to spare, Señor MacNamara. I haf leat a boy via de cigar-shop. Madame gif me de warning not soon enough."

"What warning?"

"You not know? I suppose not. Vell, dey cannot hurt you. Some day I see you more. I know not ven. I haf paid myself from de cash. Good-by, señor. Dose bollce look at me. I most be gone."

"Police? Warning? Mrs. Bounce, too?" exclaimed Vandy, as he looked after the departing form of the Spaniard. "I must go and see what this means."

His first visit was to the cigar-shop, and all was quiet there. A boy, whom Garcia sometimes hired to help him, stood behind the counter.

"Anybody been here?"

"Not a soul, except a couple of cops that asked after old Garcia."

"What did you tell them?"

"Told you I didn't know anything about him."

"Did they ask after me?"

"I told them you'd be in by-and-by, but they said they didn't want to see you. Something's gone wrong with the don."

"Nothing bad, I hope. I'll be back after a while."

Very rapidly he walked to Mrs. Bounce's corner, but the apple-stand was not in its accustomed place, and Vandy darted up the stairs.

He knocked at Mother Bounce's door, and when no answer came, he opened it, but there was no one there.

"Clip!" he shouted, as he hammered at the door of her room.

"Come in."

And in he went.

"Oh, Vandy, I'm so glad you've come. I haven't seen grandma this morning. What has become of her? I haven't even had any breakfast."

"You shall have, then. I'll attend to that first. Come right along with me and get some, and I'll tell you all I know as we go along."

So he did, hard as it was to tell, and it nearly spoiled for Clip the nice breakfast Vandy had ordered for her at the Stevens House when they got there.

Of course, Clip could not believe Mrs. Bounce had done anything wicked, and Vandy made no effort to change her mind.

"She'll come back, Clip, after a while."

"But what am I to do while she's gone? Oh, Vandy, you're the only friend I have in the world."

"Come and see my mother."

That was a word that sounded very nicely in Clip's ears, and she gladly went, but when they came in front of Pennerby & Co.'s, there stood Phil on the steps.

"Come right in, Vandy. Mr. Pennerby wants to see you at once."

A strange idea came flashing into the mind of Vandy, and he merely answered:

"Yes, Phil. Come with me, Clip."

Old Mr. Pennerby arose from his chair as they entered, side by side, and his eyes were expanding widely, but he began:

"So Vandy, it's to you I'm indebted for my warning. I thank you, eh? Who's this, Vandy? What can I do for you, eh? But who's this?"

Clip had been looking up into his face with a smile that grew brilliant as she heard him speak so kindly to her friend, and old Mr. Pennerby felt his very heart soften as he looked back at her.

"If you please, Mr. Pennerby, I wouldn't take a thing from you; but Clip needs a friend very much."

"She does, does she, eh? I do declare! Why, Clip, my dear, I should think you'd have all the friends you needed."

"Vandy's mine, sir."

"Good for Vandy. Come, now, tell me all about it. I'm glad Mrs. Pennerby and the girls 'll be home to-morrow. I know they will, in spite of me."

But he listened, with more than one exclamation, while Vandy hurried through with his story of Clip and her loneliness.

"I'll take her right to my own house, Vandy; I will, eh?"

"If you only would, sir. But Clip isn't poor."

"She isn't poor, eh?"

"No, sir, not poor. She owns half the tobacco-shop, and she owns the house on the corner, and there's more money from place to place, I'm afraid."

"I declare! Why, she's quite an heiress. She must be taken care of."

Vandy had learned from Mother Bounce, what Clip did not know, that the "damages" paid by the railway had been used for a first payment on the house, and that the rent would about meet the remaining cost in the course of time. It was in Clip's own name, too, and only needed the management of a good man of business, and the use of some money in improvements, to be made to pay very well.

Phil and Sile looked on in a good deal of amazement, but Clip exclaimed:

"I don't want to be too far from Vandy, sir."

"We'll see about that."

"We were going to Coney Island to-day, sir, and now we can't."

"Just as well. You can go right out to my place in the country, both of you. I'll give you a note to the housekeeper. Won't Mrs. Pennerby open her eyes!"

"Maybe she won't grant me, sir."

"I'll trust to your face for that. And my tongue, too, perhaps. There, now, Vandy, you and Clip go right along. I'll not be there till I come with Mrs. Pennerby, to-morrow."

Vandy scarcely knew whether he was on his head or his heels, for the question of what to do with Clip had been a dreadful one.

But the moment they were gone, Mr. Pennerby had to turn his attention again to business and the panic.

The latter had cost him something, but not much, but before night it was only too clear that Mr. Dunman was, as he expressed it, "Clean wiped out."

Not only was he a bankrupt, but some of his creditors, like old Squam, were of a kind not likely to let go their hold on him. The money that came to him in crooked ways had left him by a straight and sure one, and he was worse off than Vance.

Somewhere between him and Madderley.

It took days and days to get to the bottom of that panic, but the police failed to get to the bottom of their charges against Mother Bounce and Garcia. In the course of time they dropped out of mind, whatever they were.

By old Mr. Pennerby's advice, Vandy MacNamara shortly sold out his cigar "die-van" and entered the office along with Phil and Sile.

Such a team they made! and so fast the years went by!

Five of them, the years, that is, and the day Vandy was twenty-one Clip was about nineteen.

Such a handsome couple they made, for Clip had now no sign of a limp, and she never would look at any other young man than Vandy.

That was a grand wedding they had that day at the Pennerby villa, and the old gentleman said to the bride:

"He'll be in the firm, soon, Clip. He's a born merchant. There'll be three of 'em in time, and it'll be Pennerby & Co. with a vengeance; how's that, Phil? And you, Sile? Can you bring in as promising partners as Vandy has?"

"If we can find them," said Phil, with a bow to Clip.

It was a grand good time, but the very day after the young couple were settled in the neat bit of a home they had chosen, the one servant they began with came in to tell them:

"There's a very cold woman in the parlor, mum, wants to see you and Mr. MacNamara."

"Can it be her?" exclaimed Clip, as she sprang forward.

Vandy followed her.

"Clip, darlin', is it yerself? Oh, but you're an angil!"

"Grandma! grandma!"

"Oh, Clip!—and Vandy, me by'e, is that your own face I see?"

"Mother Bounce! Well, now we've got you we'll keep you. Where have you been all this time?"

She told them. It had not been so far away that she could not hear about them now and then, but she was dreadfully, almost foolishly, afraid of the police, and she had kept quiet.

"Not that I ever took a thing I didn't pay for, Clip, darlin'. But we'll not spake of that. I'm a poor, lone woman, and I wanted to see yez both, now there's only wan of yez. It's not long I've to stay, the now."

But there's no telling, for the old apple-woman is there yet, utterly at home in the sunny household of Clip and the Janitor's Boy.

THE END.

HOW THE GIRAFFE IS HUNTED.

SIR WILLIAM HARRIS, while traversing the Bâquains country in quest of game, encountered a large herd of giraffes, and thus describes his sport with them:

"After the many mischances, how shall I describe the sensations I experienced, as on a cool November evening, after rapidly following some fresh traces in profound silence for several miles, I at length counted, from the back of my most trusty steed, no fewer than thirty-two giraffes of various sizes, indolently stretching their peacock-necks to crop the tiny leaves that fluttered above their head in a flowering mimosa grove which beautified the scenery.

"My heart leaped within me, and my blood coursed like quicksilver through my veins, for with a firm, wooded plain before me, I knew they were mine; but, although they stood within a hundred yards of me, having previously resolved to try the boarding system, I reserved my fire.

"Notwithstanding that I had taken the field expressly to look for giraffes, and had taken four mounted Hottentots in my train, all excepting Piet had, as usual, slipped off unperceived in pursuit of a troop of koodoos.

"Our stealthy approach was soon opposed by an ill-tempered rhinoceros, which, with her old-fashioned looking-calf, stood directly in the path, the twinkling of her bright little eyes, accompanied by a restless rolling of the body, giving earnest of her mischevious intentions. I directed Piet to salute her with a broadside, at the same time spurring my horse. At the report of the gun and sudden clattering of hoofs, away bounded the herd in grotesque confusion, clearing the ground by a succession of frog-like leaps, and leaving me far in their rear. Twice were their towering forms concealed from view by a pack of trees, which we entered almost at the same instant; and twice on emerging from the labyrinth did I perceive them filing over an eminence far in advance, their sloping backs reddening in the sunshine, as with giant port they topped the ridges in right gallant style.

"A white turban that I wore round my hunting-cap, being dragged off by a projecting bough, was instantly charged and trampled under foot by three rhinoceroses; and long afterward, looking over my shoulder, I could perceive the ungainly brutes in the rear, tagging themselves to overtake me.

"In the course of five minutes, the fugitives arrived at a small river, the treacherous sands of which, deceiving their spider legs, their flight was greatly retarded, and by the time they had floundered to the opposite side, and scrambled to the top of the bank, I could perceive that their race was run.

"Patting the steaming neck of my good steed, I urged him again to his utmost, and instantly found myself by the side of the herd. The lordly chief being readily distinguishable from the rest by his dark chestnut robe and superior stature, I applied the muzzle of my rifle behind his dappled shoulder with my left hand, and drew both triggers; but he still continued to shuffle along, and being afraid of losing him should I dismount among the extensive mimosa groves with which the landscape was now obscured, I sat in my saddle loading and firing behind the elbow, and then placing myself across his path to obstruct his progress.

"Mute, dignified and majestic, stood the unfortunate victim, occasionally stooping his elastic neck, toward his persecutor, the tears trickling from the lashes of his dark, humid eye, as broadside after broadside was poured into his brawny front.

"Fearful to relate, he neither reared nor kicked; his limbs, his coat stood on end, his lofty frame began to totter, and at the seventeenth discharge of the deadly grooved bore, like a falling minaret he bowed his graceful head and was presently prostrate in the dust. Never shall I forget the intoxicating excitement of that moment! At last, then, the summit of my ambition was actually attained, and the towering giraffe laid low. Tossing my turbanless cap in the air, alone in the wildwood, I hurrahed with burstling exultation, and, unsaddling my steed, sate entranced with delight beside the noble prize that I had won.

"While I leisurely contemplated the massive form before me, seeming as though it had been cast in a mold of brass and wrapped in a hide an inch and a half in thickness, it was no longer a matter of astonishment that a bullet discharged from a distance of eighty or ninety yards should have been attended with little effect upon such amazing strength.

"Two hours were passed in completing a drawing, and Piet not making his appearance, I cut off the ample tail, which exceeded five feet in length, and was now reckoned the most estimable trophy I had ever gained."

Without doubt, the expression bestowed on the hunter by a mortally-stricken giraffe must be of potent quality. Strong-hearted men, without any remark beyond the fat or lean condition of their game, tell of their victims over the tenderer cuts of the deer tribe—including the unoffending oryx and sambur, and the gentle eland; but when they come to giraffe-hunting, at all events to giraffe-slaying, then is the time for solemn and pathetic language.

You might almost feel the lips of their steel pens trembling with emotion as the inky and sorrowful facts flow from them. Why, even Mr. Cumming, on whom, as a rule sentiment, or anything approaching it, sits about as easily as a dove on the back of a porcupine—who (as the good reader will recollect) having smashed somebody's shoulder, was at the pains to brew a little coffee, and lie down and sip it while he enjoyed the pretty sight—the coffee doubtless assimilating with the crushed limb in the mind of the sportsman, as does wine with walnuts in the minds of ordinary mortals—even he, the redoubtable Boulerye, Gordon Cumming, found it hard to slaughter the gentle and beautiful giant without a pang of remorse.

Speaking of his first giraffe, he says: "In a short time I brought her to a stand in the dry bed of a watercourse, where I fired at fifteen yards, aiming where I thought the heart lay, upon which she again made off. Having loaded, I followed, and had very nearly lost her; she had turned abruptly to the left, and was far out of sight among the trees. Once more I brought her to a stand, and dismounted from my horse. There we stood together, alone in the wild wood; I gazed in wonder at her extreme beauty, while her soft, dark eye, with its silky fringe, looked dumb imploringly at me, and I really felt a pang of sorrow in this moment of triumph for the blood I was shedding. Pointing my rifle toward the skies, I sent a bullet through her neck. On receiving it, she reared on her hind-legs and fell backward with a heavy crash, making the earth shake around her. I had little time to contemplate the prize I had won. Night was fast setting in, and it was very questionable if I should succeed in regaining my wagons; so, having cut off the tail of the giraffe, which was adorned with a bushy tuft of flowing black hair, I took 'one last fond look' (vide popular song), and rode hard for the spoor of the wagons, which I succeeded in reaching after dark."

THE PIRATE AND THE YACHT.

AN ADVENTUROUS TALE.

SOME few years ago, a small American yacht was sailing along the waters of that lovely azure sea which seldom loses its color or its temper.

We need scarcely add that it was the Mediterranean. On the deck were four persons.

The steersman, Simon Phillips, his daughter Emma, and his nephew Edward.

The wind was lazy.

So were the occupants of the yacht.

"It is awfully hot, uncle," remarked the youth, whose age was about nineteen.

"I believe so," was the laughing reply; "if it were not for the awning, I should expire. Ned, tell the steward to let us have some iced cham."

The order was readily given, obeyed, and the desired beverage consumed.

"Papa!" suddenly cried Emma, a very lovely girl of seventeen; "look—how beautiful!"

The father and the cousin looked as requested.

They were on the northwest coast of Africa, at no great distance from Gibraltar.

They were passing a small bay, known to sailors by various names.

It was first discovered by the Portuguese in their palmy days, just about the time they dared to cleave the waves of the southern Atlantic.

What the woolly-headed inhabitants of the coast called it nobody knows, or nobody cares.

Region sailors, from some motive or other, denominated it Crank Bay.

It was not the landscape that Emma Phillips had noticed.

The mainland by its curvature possessing, and certainly requiring at present few harbors, displays perhaps the least inviting of all prospects.

It obers to the view nothing but a shelving beach of dazzling white sand with a few small hummocks beat up by the occasional fury of the Atlantic gales, and bare and without the slightest appearance of vegetable life.

The inland prospect was shrouded over by a dense mirage, through which here and there were to be discerned the palm of the sun-tree, so broken and disjointed by refraction that they presented to the imagination anything but the idea of foliage or shade.

The water in the bay was as calm and smooth as a polished mirror.

Not the slightest ripple was to be heard upon the beach to break through the silence of nature.

Not a breath of air swept over its glassy surface, which was heated with the intense rays of a vertical noon-day sun, pouring down a withering flood of light and heat.

Not a seabird was to be discovered wheeling on its flight, or balancing on its wings as it pierced the deep with its searching eye, ready to dart upon its prey.

All was silence, solitude and desolation, save that occasionally might be seen the fins of some pale shark, sluggishly moving through the heated element.

A sight so sterile, so stagnant, so little adapted to human life, could not well be conceived, unless by flying to extremes we were to describe the chilling blast, the trandizing cold and close ribbed ice at the frozen pole.

At the entrance to this bay, in about three fathoms of water, headless of the spring cable which lay down as a rope which had fallen overboard, there floated, motionless as death, a vessel whose proportions would have challenged the unanimous admiration of those who could appreciate her build, had she been anchored in the most frequented and busy harbor in the universe.

So very beautiful were her lines that you might almost have imagined her a created being that the ocean had been ordered to receive.

From the huge leviathan to the smallest of the finny tribe, from the towering albatross to the boding petrel of the storm, where could be found amid the winged and finned frequenters of the ocean a form more appropriate, more fitting than the specimen of human skill, whose beautiful model and elegant tapering spars were now all that could be discovered to break the meeting lines of the firmament and horizon of the offing.

And yet she was fashioned at the will of blood and avarice, of cruelty and injustice.

Once she had been a slaver; she was now the famed, still more dreaded, pirate, the *Skimmer of the Seas*.

No English man-of-war that ever scoured the deep, but had her instructions relative to this vessel, which had been so successful in her career of crime; not one trader in the navigable globe but whose crew shuddered at the mention of her name, and the remembrance of the atrocities which had been practiced by her reckless crew.

She had been everywhere.

In the east, in the west, in the north, and in the south, she had been seen, leaving behind her a track of rapine and murder.

There she lay in her motionless beauty, her bow sides painted black, with one small narrow ribbon of red—her raking masts were clean scraped—her topmasts, her crosstrees, her caps, and even her running blocks were painted in pure white.

Awnings were spread fore and aft to protect the crew from the powerful rays of the sun, her ropes were hauled taut, and in every point she wore the appearance of being under the control of seamanship and strict discipline.

Through the clear smooth water her copper shone brightly, and as you looked over her taffrail down into the calm blue sea you could plainly discern the sandy bottom beneath her, and the anchor which floated under her.

A small boat floated astern, the weight of the rope which attached her appearing in the half calm to draw her toward the schooner.

As his daughter called his attention to the beautiful vessel, Simon Phillips, after staring for a moment, turned deadly pale.

"A beautiful vessel," he said, "but a snake in the grass. Edward, run aloft, with your glass and see if the crew are on board."

Edward obeyed, and came down sharply to say that he could only make out the steersman and two sailors.

"Thank heaven," responded Simon—"thank heaven, my children. The captain of that vessel is my bitter foe—the one who has vowed my death."

The surprise of the young people may be more easily imagined than described.

Both had heard of the matter before, but knew nothing of the whole circumstances.

Simon Phillips said not another word.

It was a secret he wished kept.

"Edward, my boy," he presently remarked to his nephew, "look around; what think you of the weather?"

"Wind, uncle, and soon," was the reply.

And Ned Phillips was right.

Before an hour there came a rustling on the water, a bank rose in the distance, and the yacht was speeding along with a wet sheet and a flowing sea.

The pirates were lost to sight.

But they had not sailed by so unobserved as they expected.

While they were passing, however, somebody was looking on.

In the distance the Corsair, looking out from the sea palace he occupied, said to one of his men, waving his Oriental fan:

"What is that?"

"I know not," replied the other man.

"Is it the yacht?" was the fierce reply. "Speak, or you die!"

"It is the yacht," the man answered.

The captain of the pirate was on board, with, it is true, only the crew they had seen.

He had recognized the yacht, and at once sent a messenger to an inland village where the men were carousing.

It was no easy matter to collect a gang of such a character, but by dark night they were together.

Not a moment of time was wasted.

The captain, a rather hook-nosed ruffian, stood near the binnacle.

Beside him was a gray-haired man.

The captain was, though of herculean proportions, as fine a specimen of humanity as any one could wish to see.

His costume was elegant, and well adapted to his form; linen trousers and untanned leather boots, such as are worn in the Western Isles; a broad-striped cotton shirt, a red cashmere shawl round his waist as a sash, a vest embroidered in gold tissue, with a jacket of dark velvet, and pendent gold buttons, hanging over his left shoulder after the fashion of Mediterranean seamen. A round Turkish skull-cap, handsomely embroidered, a pair of pistols and a long knife in his sash, completed his attire.

The crew consisted of about a hundred and fifty of almost every nation, but chiefly Spanish or Maltese. But, sorrowful as the confession is, every officer was an Englishman.

Yes, lawless Englishmen, who had declared war upon humanity, and their own country in particular.

The commander of the *Skimmer of the Seas* was called Captain Ralph.

"Seymour," said the skipper with a bland smile, showing his ivory teeth, "where do you think we are going?"

"I neither know nor care," was the sad and weary reply.

"Really, now," sneered the other. "Would you be surprised to hear that only a few hours ago the *Osprey* yacht, Captain Simon Phillips, passed within sight?"

"Merciful heaven!" the gray-haired man exclaimed, clasping his hands.

"It is a fact," the other remarked, with a peculiar smile. "At last we shall have him in our power."

"Miscreant! you would not injure him or his!" the other cried.

"Thomas Seymour, as you choose to call yourself, you must be mad," the pirate chief went on. "Four lives stand between myself and a fortune. Your life is not worth counting, but that of Simon Phillips, as he calls himself, his daughter and nephew, are more hard to compass."

"Wretched fend, you would never dare!" gasped the gray-haired man who was addressed as Seymour.

"My good fellow, I dare do anything that may be required to win forty thousand a year and immunity," sneered the other, and then he added, bluntly: "And now go below, lest I finish you off, to begin with."

The gray-haired man, who was not quite fifty years of age, sighed and obeyed.

He went below to the cabin.

The fittings of this place were simple.

On each side was a standing bed-place, against the after bulk was a large buffet, originally intended for glass and china, but now loaded with silver and gold vessels of every shape and description, collected by the lawless pirate from the different ships which he had plundered.

The lamps were also of silver, and evidently had been intended to ornament the shrine of some Catholic saint.

The man called Seymour, on entering the cabin, opened a cupboard, and with a trembling hand took out a bottle of brandy.

He poured out nearly a tumblerful and drank it off.

He then sighed and seated himself.

"Can nothing be done to save them?" he gasped. "Oh, most merciful Creator, help me in this cruel strait!"

Here we leave him, to return to the yacht.

Simon Phillips knew very well that in any engagement with the pirate he would be foolish even to resist.

He carried only small arms, and just one small eight-pounder to fire signals.

What was to be done?

Not one wink did he sleep that night, and at dawn of day he roused Ned.

"My boy," he said, "at any moment we may be overhauled by that awful ruffian. Death is the least danger."

"Oh, uncle!" gasped the boy. "You really cannot believe it?"

"I have his own word for it," was the solemn answer. "Say no more, but let us try to escape from him."

"Order, uncle, and I will obey."

"Go aloft, scan the horizon, and let me know the result," said Mr. Phillips.

Ned obeyed, and soon returned to the deck.

"The pirate and a gun-brig!" he replied.

"Which is nearer?"

"The gun-brig."

"Haul up a signal of distress," was the answer, "and then keep a sharp lookout."

Ned obeyed.

The pirate was seven miles off, the gun-brig six. But the pirate was a splendid sailer. It was likely that he would come up first.

Simon Phillips, however, now assumed a very cheerful air.

The yacht, as far as the wind allowed, steered for the gun-brig.

Ned sat in the cross-trees watching.

An hour passed.

The pirate was within a mile, the gun-brig within three-quarters.

Ned had a good glass, and scanned both vessels. He could not but admire the *Skimmer of the Seas*. She was deceptive.

At a distance she looked to be a small vessel of only ninety tons.

On close inspection she proved to be of at least two hundred.

Her breath of beam was enormous.

Her spars that looked so light were of unexpectedly large dimensions.

Her decks were made from narrow fir planks, without the least spring or rise.

Her ropes were of fine Manilla hemp, neatly secured to copper belaying pins, and coiled down on the deck, whose whiteness was well contrasted with the bright green paint of her bulwarks; her capstan and bulwarks were cased in foiled mahogany, and ornamented with brass; metal stanchions protected the skylights, and the bright muskets were arranged in front of the mainmast; while the boarding-pikes were lashed round the mainboom.

In the centre of the vessel, between the fore and mainmast, there was a long brass 32-pounder fixed upon a carriage revolving in a circle, and so arranged that in bad weather it could be lowered down and housed.

On each side of her decks were mounted eight brass guns of small calibre and of exquisite workmanship.

Her build proved the skill of the architect; her fitting out a judgment in which naught had been sacrificed, although everything had been directed by taste; and in the person of her commander to the strictest discipline was united the practical knowledge of a thorough seaman.

The English gun-brig was the usual ten-gun abomination, but well manned and officered.

Ned came down.

The pirate was now crowding on all sail.

Evidently, in its intense anxiety to watch the yacht, it had not noticed the man-of-war.

Probably the yacht was directly in its line of light.

"Hoist the Stars and Stripes and fire a gun," said Simon Phillips; "then out with the gig."

The orders were obeyed.

A gun replied from the gunboat, and an ensign was hoisted.

The pirate at once took in his light canvas and began to strip for action.

Simon was soon on board the gunboat.

The lieutenant in command was most polite.

"You had better come on board, sir," he said, "and leave the yacht to the care of your sailing-master. There is no wind to speak of, and every man will be wanted here. The *Skimmer of the Seas* has a heavy crew."

The American at once agreed, the transfer was made, the yacht hauled on a wind, and the gunboat *Midas* beat to quarters.

Emma was gallantly installed in the captain's cabin, as it was called.

"We'll thrash the rascals before dinner-mess," said Lieutenant Browning, "and then we'll dine."

Emma, though anxious and pale, could not help smiling at the jovial sailor.

At noon as the young lady went below, Lieutenant Browning turned to his second officer.

"Let the men look sharp," he said; "we have no common lot before us."

The sub bowed and went to give orders.

The crew were immediately on the alert, the canvas was furled and the men ready.

The *Skimmer* was not idle.

The long gun in the centre was cleared from the encumbrances which surrounded it.

The other guns were cast loose, shot handed up and everything prepared for action with as much energy and discipline as on board a man-of-war.

The gunboat had simply sailed toward him.

The *Skimmer of the Seas* now ranged up within a cable's length of the *Midas* to leeward.

"Surrender or sink!" shouted the thick, hoarse voice of the chief.

A general discharge from a broadside and a heavy volley of muskets was the answer.

The broadside, rather too elevated to hit the low hull of the pirate was still not without its effect: the foretopmast fell, the jaws of the main gaff were severed, and a large proportion of the standing as well as the running rigging came rattling down on the decks.

A dozen pirates were wounded, some dangerously.

"Fire away!" shouted the pirate; "give it them hot—right at her!"

He was obeyed.

The fight had commenced in earnest.

The pirate bore round, and then again her head was turned toward the brig; her position was right astern.

The long thirty-two pounder was now regularly served, the shots passing through the cabin window.

By the advice of the lieutenant in command, Emma lay on the ground on a mattress.

The gun raked the vessel fore and aft.

But the brig retaliated, and kept up a murderous fire.

The English man-of-war had a crew of less than a hundred.

Her captain—he is always called so by the men—wished to reduce the force of the pirate before a hand-to-hand conflict.

But the pirate was anxious.

The sound of firing might be heard by inconvenient ears.

English men-of-war are very prying.

The *Skimmer of the Seas* had refitted during the fight, and was ready.

She now ranged up on the quarter of the brig, a black flag at her peak.

Both fired at the same moment.

Before the smoke cleared away there was a concussion, a shout, and the bloodthirsty gang poured upon the decks of the devoted brig.

Simon Phillips was armed with pistol and cutlass.

He flew to meet the pirate chief, who cut him down at the first blow, leaving him senseless on the deck.

Ned stood back, avoiding the pirate chief.

"Heaven preserve me!" he muttered. "I cannot slay my father!"

The fight was desperate.

The crew of the gun-brig were brave, but numbers will tell.

They were beaten back.

"Hurrah, my lads!" suddenly shouted Lieutenant Browning. "We have them. Does all——"

Bang, bang!

The guns of a frigate that came looming out of a dense fog.

In less time than it takes to record the fact, the pirates had fled, leaving their killed and wounded.

With an energy born of despair, they cut themselves adrift.

All hail was set.

On came the frigate, but also on came the fog, and the wind ceased.

The brig and the frigate fired minute-guns, but before they were united, the pirate had disappeared in the dense vapor.

A few days more, and the yacht was at Malta.

Simon Phillips was a man of great repute and high position.

Almost anything he asked for was sure to be granted.

Money was no object.

He did not spend a quarter of his income.

After his recovery from his wounds—they were very superficial—he had a long interview with the Governor of Malta.

They came to an understanding.

The Governor was aware that there were sure to be pirate spies in Malta itself.

One fine morning, however, an eighteen-gun brig left the harbor and sailed away, it was reported, with dispatches for England.

It might have amazed some of those who were present at her departure to have seen the vessel next day.

She lay in a small, unfrequented harbor on the other side of the island.

Her carpenters and other men were at work, especially painters.

She was hastily turned into a heavy, slovenly-looking merchantman.

Some old sails were hoisted, patched and pieced.

No one could ever have fancied, after two days of manipulation, that this was a man-of-war.

The third day she sailed.

As she passed Malta harbor, not one person but those in the secret could possibly suspect her real character.

She veered to the northward. Then out from the harbor came the yacht, and sailed more to the westward.

By a prearrangement the two vessels kept in sight of one another.

They had a code of day and night signals.

Emma Phillips was left at Malta.

The yacht was engaged on a daring and perilous enterprise.

The American had pledged himself to capture and destroy the pirate.

He would bring the chief to the bar of justice though he never would no longer be permitted.

The robberies, murders and worse, cried aloud to heaven for vengeance.

Young Ned was sad and low-spirited.

He had been taught for seven years to consider the father he had never seen a dark villain, a wretch whom heaven must punish in its good time.

Still he was his father.

Ned had never practically known any other father than his uncle.

He loved him dearly.

The whole mystery of his father had never been revealed to him.

It was a secret that Simon Phillips shunned the explanation of.

That he was a consummate villain, a cold-blooded pirate, a ruffian of the deepest dye, he heard and saw.

But to Simon himself this was a partial mystery.

From the time when, just before the birth of his son, he left America under most painful and singular circumstances, he had been considered the no-blest of men.

A sharp lookout was kept.

Nothing was seen for two days, during which the yacht and the seemingly lumbering merchantman had no communication except by signal.

Simon, who was pale and haggard from watching, would not leave the deck.

Ned watched him keenly.

The youth was himself very thin and wan. The suspense was too much for him.

He, however, did his duty as usual.

The greater part of his time was spent aloft, looking out.

Several false alarms took place. At last, however, Ned believed himself correct.

"Sail, oh!" he cried.

It was about an hour before dark when he saw it.

He descended rapidly.

"The pirate," he said, in a low voice to Simon Phillips.

The uncle gave a great sigh.

"At last the sacrifice will be consummated," he muttered to himself.

Ned glanced at the merchantman; she was four miles off.

She was a biggish looking craft.

"We must run as if for protection," said the captain and owner of the yacht.

He was a first-class sailor—had been so from his boyhood.

The pirate was six miles off when sighted. It was now coming nearer very fast.

As the sun sank down on the wave, and darkness obscured the deep, she was within a mile and a half of the yacht; the lumbering old merchantman was not three-quarters of a mile off.

The pirate began firing with its long gun, the report echoing over the water, and its loud resonance swept by the wind over the salt sea.

The merchantman changed its course as if running away altogether, the yacht followed.

The first moved, however, but slowly through the water.

It had a spar mainyard trail, behind, with a rope sail attached to it.

This deadened its way. But up came the pirate, this time without a flag, and still firing.

"What ship is that?" shouted the pirate, again arrayed as before.

"The royal yacht *Cupid*," was the reply.

Strike the royal yacht *Cupid*!" roared the pirate.

The yacht kept on.

"What ship is that?" roared the pirate through his trumpet, addressing the supposed merchantman.

"Her Majesty's eighteen-gun-brig *Scourge*!" was the reply.

As the words were uttered, a canvas screen that concealed the battery of guns was hauled up, the sham sail fell, all the delusive characteristics of a lumbering merchantmen disappeared, and she revealed what she was—a man-of-war.

The *Skimmer of the Seas* had caught a Tartar.

But the pirate scorned to flee.

Up went the black flag, and the swivel gun again was fired.

The *Scourge* replied with a broadside, and then edged down toward the schooner.

The eighteen-gun-brig was well-manned and served.

The brig came down upon the pirate with a crash.

"Where is Mr. Seymour?" cried the pirate, in a towering passion; "he was at my elbow a minute ago."

"Went below, sir," replied the second officer.

"Order him up," was the savage answer; "or I'll know the reason why."

The officer went to obey orders, but Mr. Seymour was nowhere to be found.

The pirate smiled sardonically.

"He's only put off," he said, with an expressive shrug. And he turned to fight the foe.

The pirates knew that, except for a very great chance, their fate was sealed.

The yacht counted for nothing, but a well-manned man-of-war was more than their match.

The pirates, stripped to their trousers, prepared to fight like demons.

Death by the bullet or the yardarm—they preferred the first.

The captain of the *Skimmer of the Seas* knew this, and smiled coldly.

He stood with a night-glass in his hand, watching.

The broadsides were vomited forth with furious energy.

The vessels, meanwhile, kept nearer and nearer.

"All hands for boarding!" shouted the captain of the *Scourge*.

"Ay, ay!" was the general shout.

Not the least fervent of these acclamations was from Simon Phillips and Ned.

But the latter's enthusiastic cry was only assumed.

In his heart he viewed this fight with horror.

But he was bound to obey his good and generous uncle.

The vessels gave one last volley, and then, as it were, became locked in the embrace of death.

The rush of both bearded pirates stood ready to meet the rush of the men-of-warsmen.

The shock was terrific.

The pirates were desperate, the sailors furiously indignant.

No quarter was asked or given.

Simon Phillips flew at the chief, who had wounded him before—his brother.

The pirate received him with a chuckle.

Both fired their pistols, and then fought with swords.

Simon Phillips was tolerably collected, despite his hate and passion.

Leaving the others to do what they pleased, he rushed on the pirate chief.

Simon struck a fearful blow, and the pirate chief fell.

The wound was a mortal one, it could be seen at once, and the American drew back.

At this moment there was a loud shout. The pirates had succumbed.

All who were not killed or hopelessly wounded ran below.

Mr. Phillips stooped over the pirate with a stern, eager look on his face, while Ned looked on shivering.

The beard fell off the pirate's chin.

"Oh, heaven!" gasped Simon. "Ralph Phillips! Wretch, where is my brother?"

"So," said the pirate, with an insolent sneer, "after fourteen years you find out what a fool you have been—how you have embittered your existence for nothing."

"My brother, then, was——"

"Innocent," cried the dying pirate.

"Where is he?" shrieked the baronet.

"Here!" said the so-called Mr. Seymour.

"Oh, Edward!" exclaimed the American; "how bitterly I have misjudged you! Can you ever forgive me?"

"My dear brother, I never blamed you; you have been made the dupe of our wretched cousin," the other answered, holding out both hands.

"My father innocent!" gasped Ned. "Oh, most merciful Father, how I thank Thee!"

And the young man fell almost fainting on his parent's breast.

"When all this sniggering is over," said Captain Ralph Phillips, "you will perhaps allow my steward to give me a glass of brandy."

They turned away and gave some whispered instructions.

The man came up with the captain's usual tumbler.

He knew not he was dying.

Captain Ralph clutched at it, put it to his lips, drained every drop, and fell back—dead!

Simon hurried his brother and nephew away, and bidding the captain of the *Scourge* make all sail for Malta, went on board the *Cupid*.

Here in the cabin all was explained.

Fourteen years before Ralph Phillips, a disappointed navy lieutenant, had determined to rid himself of all who stood in his way.

A business and four hundred thousand a year was to him elysium.

Simon, the elder, lived.

Ralph had disappeared four years.

On one October evening fourteen years before Edward Phillips received a mysterious letter.

It was from Ralph.

He said he was in England, in great trouble. Would Edward see him and get him out of this scrape when he would go to America?

He gave his address at a fishing village four miles off.

The house indicated was an inn of bad repute.

But Edward was brave and good-hearted.

He went.

Ralph had not come in, but left a message for his cousin to wait.

Meanwhile Ralph had crept round to Morland, a house belonging to the family.

He knew a secret way of entrance.

He was of exactly the same build as Edward; and this was his plan:

He went to Edward's bedroom, and dressing in his clothes, hid his own.

Then he went boldly to the library, and without the least compunction stabbed the old man with a dagger, a family relic.

He then went out, using very little caution, but effecting a great pretense of secrecy and silence.

Two hours later there was a hue and cry for Edward Phillips, the parricide.

He was never seen again.

Ralph drugged his drink and carried him on board the pirate vessel.

Now began his misery.

Ralph for years had studied Edward's hand writing.

He wrote a cynical letter, boasting, in his cousin's name, of having killed his father.

"I only wish you had been at home, Simon," the precious epistle went on: "but don't crow too much. I mean to be born yet, if I wade through a sea of blood. Look out!"

It was awful, but nobody could doubt the handwriting.

Mrs. Edward died when her son was four months old, and Uncle Simon took the boy to his bosom.

Every year came an insulting and sneering letter, repeating the threats.

Nobody suspected Ralph, of whom nobody had ever heard, and who was supposed to be dead.

"Brother! brother!" cried Simon, in a choked voice. "some have suspected you all this time. Pity the scoundrel died without a confession."

"It is here," was the answer. "Two years ago, thinking he was dying of fever, and I nursing him, he said, 'Edward, if I croak, you may as well have the benefit of it,' and he got a prisoner, who was to pay a fabulous ransom, to write it out. The man had two daughters, and the father gave nearly all his substance, a hundred thousand pounds, for his own life and his daughter's. The girls signed as witnesses. They still live at Alexandria."

"Thank heaven!" said Simon.

The sensation, when the three vessels entered Malta, was something terrific.

The pirates were hanged in the proportion of one out of every four; the others were sentenced to life-long imprisonment.

Young Ned is now the husband of Emma, with a considerable family.

The others have passed away in peace.

THE BLACK WOLF.

CHAPTER I.

HOW HE CAME.

"WHY, drat your stupid head, Giles, you don't ask us to believe that, surely?"

With which remark Tom, the carter, set down untasted the mug of beer which he was in the act of conveying to his lips, and regarded his companion with a look in which wonder and fear were curiously blended.

"Stupid head, eh?" retorted Giles, bridling; "not so fast, friend Tom, if you please. Stupid! Darn my old skin but they used to be polite when I was a young 'un—a deuced deal more so than they are now. You don't know everything, Tom, though you think so."

"No offense, neighbor; you know I never means half I says, and I don't take it friendly of you to catch up a chance word. Let's ask Master Jack here, why, look you now, the young beggar's a laughing."

"And if I am, Giles, it's not at you I laugh."

"Hem! no; perhaps not," Giles admitted, sulkily.

"Then don't get riled."

As he gave that excellent piece of advice Master Jack rapped the table smartly with the stick he was carrying, and shouted to the landlord to bring him another mug of beer.

"That's to show I bear no malice," he said. "Come, Giles; I won't have any quarreling. Give us your fist, old man, and say no more about it."

Giles was mollified directly, and gave the other his hand, saying:

"There, I thought you'd come round. Whatever is up in the village will one day be found out, you may be sure."

And Giles shook his head mysteriously.

"All the better."

"However, Master Jack, whether I'm right or wrong, I should be glad to see a stop put to the robberies that have been going on so long," remarked Giles, leaning over the table and addressing his hearers in a cautiously subdued voice.

"So should I!" cried Jack, eagerly.

"So should I!" cried Tom.

"You two laugh at my idea that wolves did it, but if it ain't wolves, what is it?"

"Well, but you know," returned Jack, thoughtfully, "wolves are rather uncommon; nobody ever saw or heard of one in these parts. Had you said foxes, now, it might have seemed more likely."

"No," returned Giles, doggedly; "I know for certain there ain't no foxes herabouts, and as for wolves——"

The old fellow paused distrustfully.

"Perhaps you think the wolf is somewhere near, and can hear and understand us," said Jack.

"Well, I don't know so much about that; 'but safe bind find,' Master Jack; that's a proverb as I always hold by. Now I'll tell you why I don't think it's a fox—letting alone there being none, as I remarked afore."

His hearers drew close round him.

"No fox as ever I heered killed for the pleasure of the thing, and left the prey upon the ground, instead of taking it away with him. No fox, you may be sure, killed sheep as well as chickens and fowls; the beggar wouldn't be strong enough, to begin with. There's no end to the property in live stock which the village has lost in that way. I say that no fox is equal to such destructive work, and if it ain't a fox, what is it?"

"I hadn't no idea things were as bad as all that. Mother ought to have told me before," Jack said.

"Perhaps she didn't care to alarm you," hazarded Giles.

"Alarm me!" said Jack, scornfully. "Pooh! have I any chickens to lose, or sheep, either? Yet, if I thought it was a fox I'd kill it; if a——"

"Wait," said Giles, suggesting.

"No," returned Jack. "I may believe a good deal, but I can't quite swallow that. For mercy's sake don't begin arguing," he added, seeing the carter about to reply. "You're welcome to your own opinion—you and Tom here—please allow me to keep mine."

"Agreed, Master Jack; that's only fair," said Giles.

"I should like to discover this mystery, and help to bring to justice the unknown robber or robbers," remarked Jack: "but then——"

He paused, and drummed restlessly with his fingers on the table.

"Have you communicated your idea respecting the wolf to anybody but myself and Tom?" he demanded.

"To only one person more, Master Jack," answered Giles.

"And who is he?"

"Why, the softy."

"The softy! You never mean it, Giles!" cried Jack, amazed. "He's—well, you know what he is, and I don't want to speak harshly. Whatever possessed you to talk about it to a poor, half-witted fellow like that?"

"That's just it, Master Jack. It's because he is such a mooning sort o' chap, and goes rambling about everywhere that led me first to tell him what I suspected. And allow me to say there's a deal of sharpness about the softy, if you only get on the right side of him."

"I hope he won't get into trouble through what he has heard," remarked Jack.

"Into trouble, Master Jack? How should he?" asked Giles, struck by Jack's sudden gravity.

The other made no answer.

"The softy came to me and asks, 'Do you know how the chickens are killed?' and so on. What could I do but explain the matter to him? He seemed to understand me too—dang me if he didn't."

"I'm not blaming you," returned Jack, "yet I think on the whole you had better have held your peace. It can't be helped now, though. Good-by, Giles; good-by, Tom."

So saying, Jack got up, and with a farewell nod to his friends, passed down the road.

"As fine a young fellow as ever I saw," said Giles, looking after him.

"You're right," assented Tom. "I didn't it strike you, by-the-by, that his going away was rather sudden-like, considering what you were talking about?"

"Maybe he's tired, and anxious to get home."

"I don't think that's it exactly, either. Did you mark how interested he was in what you told him? Jack's as smart as a brass pin, and goes through you like a needle. I shouldn't be surprised if he had determined on tracking your wolf."

THE PIRATE AND THE YACHT.—"MR. PHILLIPS STOOPED OVER THE PIRATE WITH A STERN, RAGED LOOK ON HIS FACE. 'OH, HEAVEN!' GASPED SIMON. 'RALPH PHILLIPS? WRETCH, WHERE IS MY BROTHER?'"—SEE PAGE 343.

CHAPTER II.

JACK PAYS A VISIT TO THE MAGICIAN.

TOM was not far off the truth. Jack was indeed bent on "tracking the wolf," and that more speedily than either of the countrymen supposed.

"I will discover the meaning of this," thought the lad to himself. "Wolf, bah! that's absurd, and yet——"

Still at a loss what to make of the story of the night robber, but resolute in his resolve to discover whether it was man or beast, Jack walked smartly on till he came to a quaint, old-fashioned cottage, the last but one in the straggling street.

Jack walked up the path and stopped in front of the window. Then for the first time he appeared at a loss what to do, and hesitated.

"I don't know the magician at all," he muttered, "and he might think it very rude of me to trouble him in this way."

Now, while Jack still lingered before the window, a figure appeared at the open door, though he did not see it—a figure of foreign, not to say Oriental aspect, with a turban on its head, a loose flowing robe something like a dressing-gown about its body, and sandals of a curious texture covering its feet.

It was a quiet voice, singularly clear and penetrating in its tones.

Startled, Jack looked up, and found himself in presence of a tall, middle-aged man, bright of eye, brown of face, with a long gray beard descending on his breast.

"Are you," stammered Jack—"are you the—the magician?"

"What?" cried the other, with an air of the blankest amazement.

Jack perceived he had made a mistake.

"I beg your pardon," he said.

"Come in," returned the stranger, kindly. "My name is Martin, and I am an Englishman like yourself. And they call me a magician, do they?"

The stranger led Jack into a room behind the shop.

"I've only been here a month, and had no idea your neighbors had honored me by such a title," he explained. "Will you have a glass of wine with me?"

Jack respectfully declined the wine, but his interest in his strange host increased.

How came such a man as this to be selling wine in an obscure country village?

Perhaps Martin guessed what was passing in his mind.

"Come, I'll explain how I happen to be here, so as to put you at your ease with me," he said. "I went abroad when very young as a kind of attendant to a rich lord, a great traveler. He took a fancy to me, for I was industrious and always attended to my duty, and on one occasion was fortunate in saving his life. When he died he left me a comfortable income for life, and I wandered here and there, without care or thought, till at last I grew homesick, and I thought to myself, 'Better end your days in the old country, after all.'"

Here Martin paused and stroked his beard reflectively.

"So I traveled to Marseilles, and shipped thence for England. I still retained my Eastern garb, to which I had grown accustomed, and which, though it might excite curiosity, would serve to keep prying strangers away. But when I landed, I found that none of my kith or kin were left. Chance led me to this village, and liking the look of the place, I settled down here, and put some of my surplus tobacco in the window, not only to show I had an ostensible business, but also as a ready method of making acquaintance with my neighbors. In this plan I failed hopelessly; the villagers shunned me from the first. I know the reason now; they take me to be a magician. That, young sir, is my personal history up to the present moment."

"And I thank you for your confidence, sir," said Jack, warmly. "What an adventurous and interesting life yours must have been!"

"A little of both, certainly," assented Martin. "Now oblige me by telling me something about yourself. What is your name?"

"Jack Hone, sir."

"Of course you live in the village. I needn't ask that."

"Only when I'm at home for my holidays, as I am just now, and then I stay with my mother at Rosemary Cottage. Perhaps you know it?"

Martin shook his head.

"I'm apprenticed to an engineer in the town," continued Jack, "and live in his house when at work. My mother is a widow."

"How old are you?"

"Seventeen."

"Why, you're almost as tall as I am, already," said Martin. "Tell me next what brought you to my house, for I'm sure it was not mere curiosity."

"No, indeed, sir," returned Jack.

Jack then told him of what had happened in the village lately, and of his desire to discover the perpetrator of such outrages.

"The stupid fellow—some of them, at least—will persist that it's a wolf, but I know better," concluded Jack. "And so do you, sir."

"Hum," said Martin, guardedly. "A strange story, indeed, but it strikes me I have heard one like it before."

"You, sir?"

To this Martin made no direct reply, but rising from his chair, asked the lad if he felt disposed to take a stroll out of doors with him.

"That is, if you don't mind being seen in the company of so formidable a personage as the magician," he added, archly.

"I should think it an honor to be in your company, sir."

"Come, then," said Martin, walking to the door.

They left the cottage together.

CHAPTER III.

SOMEBODY TURNS UP.

MANY were the villagers who looked round after the stately figure of Martin and his youthful companion, as they strolled leisurely on, but neither of them took any notice.

Jack's brain was in a whirl.

Here, walking at his side, was a traveler, one who had really seen with his own eyes those wonders the boy had only read of in books. It was the proudest moment of his life.

Yet, somehow, there was little conversation between them.

Martin seemed to be absorbed in thought, and Jack had a natural diffidence in speaking to one so much older and wiser than himself, without being invited to do so.

He therefore held his peace, and only glanced from time to time at the dark, earnest face of his friend.

They had left the village behind them, and were walking down a lonely country lane, when Jack stopped.

"What's the matter?" Martin asked.

"Look there, sir!"

Jack pointed down the road.

Coming swiftly toward them from the town was a black man, not exactly a negro, but withal the darkest mulatto the lad had ever seen.

His robe, of some white fabric, looked refreshingly cool that hot Summer's day, yet, somehow, Jack didn't exactly care to see him here.

It might have been superstition, or only vulgar prejudice, but so it was.

Again he glanced at Martin.

Jack fancied that there was a slight change in the latter's countenance, but before he could notice it distinctly it was gone.

They went on; they neared the advancing mulatto and passed him.

Jack felt Martin's hand on his arm.

"Don't look after him, Jack; I had rather you didn't," he said.

"Ah, then you know him, sir?"

"Know him—yes."

And the man ground his teeth together as he spoke.

"You remember my telling you that I was lucky enough to save my good patron's life?"

Jack remembered it well.

"I drove the villain out of the tent with my sword in the dark; mind you, in the dark. I could not see his face; would to heaven I had! Some money was stolen, as was also a gold case containing my master's portrait when a child. We had the fellow arrested the next day, but the property was never found, and as nothing could be proved against him, we were obliged to set him free; yet, in my heart, I know him to be the thief.

"Jack," he added, "what would you say to going abroad with me, if I felt inclined to travel again?"

The suddenness of the proposal struck Jack with amazement.

"I like you, Jack; and I'm a lonely old fellow," added Martin. "Come with me, and I will do the best I can for you. It's better than vegetating in this dull place, at any rate."

"I would go with you with pleasure but for one reason," returned Jack, warmly.

"And that is?"

"My mother."

"Ah, true; I had forgotten," murmured Martin. "Now leave me, Jack, please. Don't think me rude, but I want to look after that black traitor."

With those words he broke away from the lad, and left him standing bewildered in the middle of the road.

CHAPTER IV.

SOVEY HAS NEWS.

JACK was very flurried and anxious when he got home, his interview with Martin having made a great impression on him.

"Mother," he said, entering the room where that good lady was sitting over her knitting, "I want to go abroad."

The knitting dropped from his mother's hands, and she leant back in the armchair in surprise.

"Jack, who ever has been putting such wild and wicked thoughts into your head?" she asked, as soon as she had recovered herself.

"Oh, don't say that,

THE BLACK WOLF.—"'LOOK THERE, SIR.' JACK POINTED DOWN THE ROAD. COMING SWIFTLY TOWARD THEM FROM THE TOWN WAS A BLACK MAN, NOT EXACTLY A NEGRO, BUT WITHAL THE DARKEST MULATTO THE LAD HAD EVER SEEN."—SEE PAGE 343.

YOUNG PICKWICK'S SCHOOLDAYS.—"DICK PUT HIS HAND OVER JOE'S MOUTH AND DRAGGED HIM ALONG."—SEE PAGE 346.

mother; they are neither the one nor the other, but I have been talking to Mr. Martin, and he——"

"Who's Mr. Martin?" demanded Mrs. Hone.

"Why, surely, you know him. The folks about here call him the magician," he answered.

Mrs. Hone was a good woman at heart, but, like many of her sex, she had her foibles, and the thought of the unknown stranger made her feel anxious on her son's account.

"You would never dream of starting off with that foreigner?" she said.

"Dear mother, why trouble yourself about it just now? Let it hide for a time, since it puts you out. And don't call him a foreigner, either, for he's as English as you or I."

"But, Jack——"

"Listen, mother. If it were necessary that I should work for your support, you know, of course, that I would. When did I ever flinch from my duty?" asked Jack, proudly. "But you know it isn't; thanks to father's forethought, you have enough to live on, whatever befalls me."

There Jack spoke the truth.

His father had managed to save a little money, and this, together with the sum for which he had insured his life, amply sufficed for the widow's modest wants.

His mother said no more; she was not convinced, but she felt it was no use arguing the matter further.

After all, her one desire was Jack's happiness, and if he really wished to go, go he must.

Mother and son were presently startled by a shrill whistle, which seemed to proceed from the back of the house.

"It's Softy," cried Jack, snatching up his hat and running out to meet him.

A very singular figure Softy looked, as he loitered under a tree with a child's toy whip in his hand, which ever and anon he brandished round his head to keep away the flies.

He wore an old coat, from which the tails, however, had been cut away; scarlet breeches—a gift from some compassionate town footman, most likely; gray worsted stockings, and shoes fastened with string instead of laces.

His long, lank, yellow hair hung on both sides of his pallid face, from under the tattered slouched hat that covered his head. His eyes rolled, and he chattered, grinned, and whistled, as only such a poor creature could.

"Well," said Jack, gently, for every one was kind to Softy—"well, what has brought you here?"

"I have seen 'um," answered Softy, slyly.

"Seen who? what do you mean?"

"The wolf, Master Jack."

Softy broke into a chuckle, but checked himself, seeing Jack's serious face.

"Steady. Do you mean to say you really have seen the—the——"

"Yes," interrupted Softy, quickly; "what's more, it's a black 'un."

"What's black?"

"The wolf, for sartin."

And softy grinned in a hideous fashion.

"Nonsense," said Jack, resolutely; "there's no such thing—at least, not down here. You have been dreaming, or have had an extra glass of ale at the 'Jolly Boys'; which is it?"

Softy persisted.

"I ain't been asleep since last night, when I went back to the barn after watching the wolf at his tricks."

"I'll take your word for it. Now you're sure you saw the wolf?"

"Yes."

Jack felt puzzled.

It happened that the Softy had a reputation for being eminently truthful; nay, his extreme veracity had been the cause of many a quarrel in the village, since he invariably reported whatever he heard.

But this of the wolf—a black wolf, too—fairly staggered Jack.

"Would you mind showing it to me?" he suggested.

A look of infinite cunning shone in Softy's eyes; he thrust one lean, clammy hand into Jack's, and whispered, hoarsely:

"Meet me to-night in the farm meadow where the pollard-tree is, and if the moon is out you shall see 'um." And off darted softy at the top of his speed.

CHAPTER V.

THE DEED.

"THIS is decidedly queer," ruminated Jack, as he returned to the cottage. "Well, I suppose there's no help for it but to wait for to-night."

Jack's restlessness could not be long hidden from his mother.

Over and over again it was on her tongue to ask what ailed him.

But Mrs. Hone was a prudent woman, and decided at last to say nothing. No doubt but her boy would by-and-by tell her himself.

Meanwhile Jack, with such an accumulation of petty cares as he had never bargained for, roamed everywhere as his inclination prompted, unable to sit down or rest.

He drank his tea standing at the table, and as soon as that meal was over quitted the room.

It wanted some two or three hours of sunset, and these Jack spent loitering on the road, ready to start when night came. It was with a feeling of unutterable relief that he saw the sun at last go down behind Farmer Hill's haystack.

Soon the twilight succeeded, and the shadows of night began to fall slowly over the village.

No moon as yet.

Was the idiot laboring under a delusion or was there indeed a wolf at large—escaped from some traveling menagerie, perhaps?

But if so, could he and the poor idiot hope to capture or destroy it, had unarmed, too? No; they would require assistance of some kind.

Bitterly did the lad reproach himself for not having thought of this before.

And happily there was still time. Jack set off, and never paused till he reached Martin's door.

A few words explained the cause of his visit.

Scarcely hearing him to the end, the veteran traveler stopped him with a single gesture, and turned on him a look that froze the blood in his veins.

"Why did you not come to me sooner?" said Martin; "but there! let us not waste precious moments in vain regrets. The poor idiot is right, and the black wolf is no other than the villain and thief who passed us on the road. Then lead on, and take this with you."

Thrusting a loaded pistol into Jack's hand, and keeping another in his own, he led him swiftly along.

It was barely half a mile to the farm meadow.

They plodded on in silence.

Out stole the moon.

"Hurrah!" cried Jack, exultingly.

The cry had scarcely escaped his lips when he started back, shuddering.

A wild, unearthly scream rang out from the farm meadow not a dozen yards away.

Martin was the first to crash through the hedge.

Jack followed.

There, a little distance from the tree behind which he had probably hidden, they found poor Softy dead, with a dagger-wound in his heart.

As Jack, horror-stricken, recoiled from the terrible spectacle, his feet struck against something lying on the grass—something that glittered in the moonlight.

He picked it up.

It was a small gold locket with a chain attached to it.

"Give it to me," said Martin.

Jack complied, and Martin opened it and showed him the portrait inside.

"The murderer dropped this in his flight, and I recognize it, as you witness, Jack. Enough; we know who he is now." The suppressed passion in Martin's face as he spoke was fearful to see. "He will not stay here now that he has shed blood, but will fly to his own country, I know his people and his tribe; I mean to hunt him down, and slay him as I would slay a wild beast. Once more, will you accompany me?"

"Yes," replied Jack. "Come what may, this poor idiot shall be avenged!"

A NIGHT IN A JUNGLE.—"AS THE HEAD DREW BACK TO MAKE THE FATAL SPRING, I TOOK A STEADY, DELIBERATE AIM, AND PULLED THE TRIGGER."—SEE PAGE 346.

CHAPTER VI.

RETRIBUTION.

AN Eastern morning, not of the brightest, the sun half dimmed and throwing a hazy yellow lustre on the dusty plain below.

Better this than the arid scorching heat of the last few days as a group of travelers engaged in conversation well knew.

The travelers were five in number.

Three of them were natives of the soil, but the other two were our old friends Martin and Jack Horn.

As regards Jack, his own mother might have found it difficult to recognize him, so tanned and stalwart had he grown.

Martin looked pretty much as he appeared in the English village; the long beard might have turned a trifle grayer, but that was all.

He seemed rather grave and anxious now, however, as he turned toward the other three men.

"You are sure the fellow will come?"

"Quite," answered the person addressed. "We have laid a trap for him. You know, or as likely as not you do not know, that this Vosco is a wonderful runner."

"And scamp, too," put in Martin, tersely.

"The two often go together, in our country at least," returned the other. "Rogues of that kind, by living much in the open air, and depending on their strength and fleetness to escape justice, often do extraordinary feats in outdistancing their pursuers. But to proceed: I have arranged with a friend, who is ill, that he is to let me know whether he is better or not, and this Vosco is selected as messenger. We have promised to pay him well. You see that scrub about a yard off?"

"I do," said Martin.

"Well, that is the point fixed—the goal, so to speak. When he arrives here you can accost him, and afterward deal with him as you please."

Bending his head low with Oriental politeness, Martin shaded his eyes with his hands, and gazed steadily across the plain.

Presently a little cloud of dust appeared in the distance, and grew larger and larger.

"'Tis he," muttered the others, and they fell back behind Martin.

Martin's lips closed a trifle tighter; but there was otherwise no change in his impassive face.

On came the runner, clearly visible now, Vosco himself.

Jack's blood coursed hotly through his veins as he saw the poor idiot's assassin.

Naked, except for the linen cloth that girt his loins, the man ran like a hare.

Another minute or two and he reached the shrub, and slackening his speed on seeing the strangers, came boldly up to Martin, whom at first he did not distinguish from the others.

"I have been quick, excellency," he remarked, fawningly.

"Not so quick as justice," returned Martin, sternly.

Then the mulatto recognized the speaker, and saw that he was entrapped.

He checked the scream that rose to his lips, and wheeled nimbly round, trusting to his fleetness of foot to save his life.

But out leapt Martin's sword, and in an instant the head of the murderer was flying from his body and sent severed into the bush.

As the headless trunk fell with a thud at Martin's feet, the old man turned to Jack.

"Jack," he said, sheathing his sword as he spoke, "since my task is done, I have changed my mind, and shall end my days in England, whither I shall return at once."

Four months later Jack and Martin arrived in England.

The friendship that had grown up between them increased, and when Martin, some five years after, breathed his last, Jack found that he had left him heir to all his wealth.

"CAPTAIN," said a cheeky youth, "is there any danger of disturbing the magnetic currents if I examine that compass too closely?" And the stern mariner, loving his little joke, promptly responded, "No, sir; brass has no effect whatever on them."

Young Pickwick's Schooldays.

CHAPTER LXII.

WICKLY CAUGHT.

NIGHT once more cast its shadows over the country, and the boys prepared for it.

"I have been trimming this lamp," said Dick, bringing a large lantern forward, "and I suggest that we fasten it to the flagstaff."

Young Pickwick went outside the house, and affixed the lantern to the flagstaff.

Tinkle was on guard, and paced up and down with an air of great importance.

Suddenly a large stone, flung by somebody in the grounds, struck the lantern and shivered it.

As the stone fell on the roof it struck Bully Mungal.

He gave a cry of mingled rage and pain.

Taking up the stone, he recklessly flung it over the parapet.

Then the boys became aware, from the howl of indignation which saluted their ears, that the lantern had been destroyed by no less a person than Miffins.

Mossy Morton took advantage of the confusion, and slowly entered the little house.

He tore a leaf from a pocketbook and wrote a few words thereon with a pencil, keeping a watch upon the door.

He rolled the note up in a pellet, and crushing it in his hand once more, left the little house and resumed his position on the parapet.

He had seen the dim outline of a boy standing near the house, and rightly conjecturing it to be Tom Ely, he dropped the pellet at his feet.

Nothing of this had been observed by his schoolfellows.

Mossy Morton now rose and walked toward the windlass.

Looking over his shoulder to see that he was unobserved, he took a knife from his pocket, and taking up a thick coil of rope, began to sever some of the strands.

Having cut the rope half through, Mossy Morton returned the knife to his pocket and joined the other boys.

"You seem restless to night, Mossy," observed young Pickwick.

"I? Oh, no," said Mossy, quickly changing the conversation, "Is the Diddler really going down to-night?" he asked.

"Yes," returned the Diddler, speaking for himself; "and I think I'll be off—about time."

But young Pickwick made no movement toward the windlass.

"Come, boys," cried the Diddler, lifting up the coil of rope.

Young Pickwick caught hold of him.

"Don't go down," he cried.

"Why not?" asked the Diddler.

"Because," returned young Pickwick, slowly and distinctly, "I should like Mossy Morton to go first."

Mossy Morton changed color.

"I have no reason for wanting to go down to the ground," he said. "I prefer being where I am."

"Down you must go," said young Pickwick.

"I won't," returned Mossy.

"Then I'll try this persuader," cried Pickwick, taking up a piece of rope and advancing toward Mossy.

But still Mossy was obstinate.

He had cut the rope, and to trust to it might result in his own death.

"You won't go," cried young Pickwick, hitting Mossy several sharp blows with the whip.

Mossy would not stand that.

He swung himself over the parapet, and the boys turned the crank.

It was an awful moment for Mossy.

As he neared the ground he began to hope that the rope would hold.

But looking up, he saw the strands of the rope giving way.

He gave a loud cry, as he felt himself falling to the ground.

But he was more shaken than hurt.

The boys on the roof heard the cry, and felt the rope snap.

"I hope he is not killed," cried the Diddler. "I can't understand how such a strong rope could break—can you, Picky?"

"Yes, I can," said Pickwick, gravely. "Mossy Morton cut the rope half through in order to kill you, and he has been nicely caught himself."

"Hadn't I better see if he is killed?" cried Dick.

"I am utterly disgusted at his conduct, but I hope nothing serious has happened to him."

"Oh, he isn't hurt much," cried Pickwick. "We let him down so fast that he must have nearly reached the ground before the rope gave way."

"I believe he is dead," observed Bully Mungal, "and that one of you chaps cut the rope."

"How dare you make such an accusation?" cried young Pickwick.

"I will repeat it," returned Bully Mungal; "it seems very strange that you should have turned him to go down, and it looks like a planned job."

Young Pickwick was too indignant to speak or move for a moment.

But when he recovered himself he rushed at Bully Mungal, dashing his fist in his face.

The blow was a severe one.

Bully Mungal fell prone on the roof, and did not offer to rise and attack young Pickwick.

"I say, Pickwick," cried Dick, anxiously; "I must go and look after Mossy."

"All right, old boy," said young Pickwick, beginning to draw up the rope.

"What stupids we are!" cried the Diddler, suddenly. "Miffins's ladder—handy—very."

The ladder was lowered over the parapet.

"Don't think you are going alone," cried young Pickwick to his friend Dick. "The Diddler and I will accompany you."

"Thanks," returned Dick; "but it is no more than I expected of you."

"Here goes!" cried the Diddler, putting his legs round the ladder, and rapidly sliding to the ground.

Young Pickwick and Dick followed his example.

They looked about them, expecting to see Mossy Morton lying on the ground, but he was nowhere to be seen.

The boys looked at each other in amazement.

"He can't be hurt much," observed Pickwick, "or he wouldn't have been able to move away."

"Somebody may have helped him off," said the Diddler.

At that moment Dick Sandhill caught sight of two men a little distance off.

They were carrying something covered with a cloak, and that something moved and struggled.

Before the three boys could recover from their surprise, the men had passed through the playground-gate.

The boys with one accord rushed toward the gate through which the men had disappeared.

When they came out upon the road the men were just driving away in a cart.

"We can't see Mossy treated like this," cried Dick. "He is my cousin, at all events. Let's follow."

"Stop!" yelled young Pickwick, as the cart drove off.

The only answer was a harsh laugh.

The three boys commenced running, the Diddler being in front.

"Stop!" they cried; but the horse was only whipped up the harder.

The Diddler, as the reader knows, was fleet of foot.

He soon outdistanced his companions, and swung himself up on the back of the cart.

Mossy was his enemy, but he would not leave him in the lurch.

The driver turned in his seat and struck the Diddler over the head with the butt-end of his whip.

The Diddler was compelled to relax his hold, and he fell to the ground.

He was on his feet in a moment, and with his chums continued the chase.

"We won't give up!" cried young Pickwick; "we shall catch them at the turnpike."

But they were mistaken.

The men spoke to Mr. Belcher, and threw him down some money.

They drove off just as the boys came panting up.

"Now, what do you want?" cried the discreet old butler, closing the gate as the boys tried to force their way through it.

"Let us pass, I say!" cried young Pickwick, excitedly. "The men in that cap have kidnapped one of our schoolfellows."

"None of your lies," said Mr. Belcher. "Yer wants to go down to the town, but you don't, my lads."

There was no time to discuss the matter, and the Diddler, putting down his head, butted Mr. Belcher in the stomach.

The pike-man rolled over on his back, and the boys hastily clambered over the gate.

But the cart was nowhere to be seen.

Thus the boys were reluctantly compelled to give up the chase and return to the school.

"Do you know anybody who could have a motive for running off with Mossy?" asked Pickwick of Dick.

"No one in the world, as far as I know," returned Dick. "It's a very singular affair altogether."

"One of us must go straight to the doctor and tell him what has happened," observed young Pickwick.

"I'll do it," said Dick; "but you must keep beyond the doctor's reach, or we shall have to give up the barring out."

"Supposing he makes you a prisoner?" said young Pickwick.

"Oh, I shall manage to escape," returned Dick.

They were now in the playground.

"Wait here an hour," commanded Dick, "and if I do not return by then go up on the roof."

"All right," said young Pickwick.

Dick cautiously tapped at the back kitchen window.

He knew that Tony Wilkins usually sat there in the evenings.

In answer to his tapping the window was thrown open.

"Oh, it's you, Master Dick," said Tony, eagerly. "I'm glad to see you."

Without making any reply to this Dick hurriedly jumped through the window.

"How have you been getting on since I saw you last?" he said, when he was standing in the kitchen.

"Well, not quite so pleasant as a fly in a sugar basin," returned Tony Wilkins; "but the doctor was left me alone this evening because we have got a chap up-stairs."

"What sort of a chap?" asked Dick.

"That there heavy-eyed chap," returned Tony Wilkins. "He looks as if he would like to kill somebody."

"Well, I'm going up to see the doctor," said Dick, leaving the kitchen.

As he drew near the library he overheard something which made him feel justified in listening to the conversation that was passing between the doctor and Mr. Leadbitter.

"Well, now that you have kidnapped the Diddler, I think you ought to give me the money at once," said the doctor, speaking rather loudly.

"What on earth can he mean?" thought Dick, who knew that the Diddler was standing in the playground.

But as he heard the men disputing a light broke in upon him.

Mossy Morton had been carried off by mistake instead of the Diddler.

"I tell you I mean to have the money, or the Diddler must be brought back!" cried the doctor.

"Come, be reasonable," said the heavy-eyed man. "You shall have half the money down, and half in three months' time. Won't that satisfy you?"

"If you will give me your word that the boy shall not be removed from the ruins until I am paid," said the doctor.

"The gypsies will keep him there until they have further orders from me," returned the heavy-eyed man. Dick had heard enough.

He turned away from the library-door and confronted Joey Snorter.

"I didn't think you could be so mean," said Joey Snorter, shaking his head.

"What are you talking about?" asked Dick, coloring.

"I didn't think you could go a-listening at keyholes, Master Dick," returned Joey Snorter.

"Hold your tongue, you silly fool," said Dick, angrily, "and talk about what you understand."

With these words he clapped his hands over Joey Snorter's mouth and pulled him along the passage.

Not a word was spoken until Dick landed his prisoner in the back kitchen.

"Hallos!" cried Tony Wilkins, "what are you going to do with Snorter?"

"Take him where he will be out of mischief," returned Dick. "I've changed my mind about speaking to the doctor."

Dick hastily passed through the kitchen-window, dragging Snorter after him.

"What are you going to do with me?" cried Joey Snorter, with a fresh burst of tears.

"Shan't tell you," returned Dick.

Young Pickwick and the Diddler were surprised to see him with such a companion.

Dick quickly related what had happened.

"Mossy hidden in the ruins," cried young Pickwick. "That means Faytree Castle, I should say."

"I think you are right," returned Dick. "At all events, we must go and see."

"Let's start at once," cried the Diddler. "I might have been in his place—unpleasant—very."

Faytree Castle was situated some ten miles from Doctor Waddle's house.

The ruins were very fine, but seldom visited, as the superstitious people of the neighborhood believed the place to be haunted.

"The Diddler is a fine fellow," cried Dick, slapping him on the back, "and he is right. We will start at once."

"I'm perfectly agreeable," returned young Pickwick, "but I don't mean to walk. Go round to the stable and make Snorter get the doctor's chaise ready, while I run up to the roof and tell the boys we are going."

"Your orders shall be obeyed," returned Dick.

And the tearful Snorter was hurried off to the stable.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE BOYS BORROW THE DOCTOR'S CHAISE.

WHEN young Pickwick came round to the stable, a few minutes later, he found the doctor's chaise standing before the door.

"Now we are all ready to start," cried young Pickwick. "Jump in, Snorter."

Snorter reluctantly obeyed.

"Shan't I get it hot from the doctor?" he said, with a muddy tear rolling down his nose.

"No, you won't," said Dick, placed the reins in his hands and bade him drive on.

Down the road they dashed in fine style.

"Hellos!" cried Mr. Belcher, popping his head over the half-door.

He looked surprised at seeing the boys in the doctor's chaise, and being driven by the doctor's page.

Joey Snorter was about to cry out, when he received a dig in the ribs which made him think better of it.

"Anybody ill up at the house?" asked Mr. Belcher.

"Oh, yes," said the Diddler; "he is crying out for the doctor—take the toll quickly, or you'll be answerable. I wouldn't be in your shoes if anything happens to him—oh, no!"

"Who is it?" asked Mr. Belcher.

"Can't wait to tell you," said the Diddler, as young Pickwick handed Belcher some money. "Let you know when we come back."

The discreet old butler stood looking after the chaise as it rolled away, and the boys, glancing back at him, laughed aloud.

They soon left the dark road and entered the village.

At this moment the musical sound of a bugle was heard.

"It is the mail-coach," cried the Diddler; "pull the chaise close up to the hedge—awkward—very—if it comes and upsets us."

"I don't care if it does," cried Joey Snorter, faintly; "I don't care for anything, and I wish I was dead."

The Diddler snatched the reins out of Joey Snorter's hand, and hastily drew the chaise close to the hedge.

The coach dashed by, and the boys resumed their journey.

This time the Diddler kept the reins.

Joey Snorter, who had been compelled by the Diddler to smoke a cigar, was too sick to do anything but groan at intervals.

The Diddler drove the brown horse along at a quick pace.

He puffed away at a cigar, occasionally taking it out of his mouth to hum a lively tune.

Young Pickwick and Dick, who had also taken cigars, felt rather sick, but they were too proud to own that such was the case.

The Diddler alone seemed as fresh and lively as usual.

But the other boys had somewhat recovered themselves when on the tall and stately towers of the ruined castle came into view.

When within three hundred yards of the ruins the Diddler and his chums alighted, and tied the brown horse to a tree.

Joey Snorter declaring himself too ill to move, they left him at the bottom of the chaise.

"We must advance with caution," said young Pickwick.

"You are right," returned Dick. "The first false move means discovery."

The boys slowly approached the ruins, keeping behind the bushes.

They came close to the ruins, and passed beneath some narrow loopholes, such as are seen in all Norman strongholds.

"Give me a back up," said young Pickwick. "I want to look in."

The Diddler did as he was asked, and young Pickwick looked through one of the openings.

There on the ground lay Mossy Morton, with two gypsies standing over him.

"I tell you I am not the person you were told to kidnap," said Mossy Morton, trying to get his hands free, for they were tied behind his back.

"If you utter that lie again," said the taller of the two gypsies, "I'll dash your teeth down your throat."

"I repeat," cried Mossy, "that I am not the boy!"

Before he could utter another word, the tall gypsy gave him a blow over the mouth.

Young Pickwick's blood was up, and he felt tempted to call out.

At that moment Dick and the Diddler, who could no longer stand young Pickwick's weight, requested him to get down.

He did so much against his will.

"The question is, how are we to get Mossy away from the gypsies?" observed the Diddler, when young Pickwick recounted what he had seen.

"Hard jobs will our work out out for us—desperate fellows—very."

"If you had seen them, you would have reason to think so," said Pickwick. "I believe that tall gypsy is the very one of whom Tinkie told us."

"No doubt," returned Dick.

Suddenly a thought struck the Diddler.

"Look here," he said; "I'll go in—make a row with them—gypsies run after me—leave Mossy—you set him free—and so on."

"But consider the danger," said young Pickwick; "why should you run more risk than we?"

"Danger be blowed," returned the Diddler; "I'm the best runner, and shall run no risk—too knowing."

"Well, if you will have your own way; where shall we meet?" asked Pickwick.

"Where we left the chaise," returned the Diddler, shaking hands with his two friends.

He walked round the ivy-clad wall, and cautiously peered in upon the gypsies.

Then he suddenly showed himself, uttering a loud and unearthly cry.

The gypsies were startled for a moment.

But their first surprise being over, they started in pursuit of the Diddler, who rushed away at the top of his speed.

To the intense astonishment of Mossy Morton he saw young Pickwick and Dick walk round the wall and look about them, to see if the coast was clear.

Once convinced on this point they rapidly cut the cords which bound Mossy Morton, and led him away.

"How came you here?" asked Mossy Morton.

Young Pickwick explained.

"How came the gypsies to cart you off?" he asked.

"Oh, I don't know," said Mossy, evasively. "Perhaps it was done for a lark."

"Now, Mossy, please to speak the truth," cried young Pickwick. "We know that you were mistaken for the Diddler."

"Oh, was I?" returned Mossy.

"I think you might give us some words of thanks," observed Dick, looking at his cousin.

"Oh, I'm very much obliged to you, and all that," said Mossy.

But he was hurt and indignant at finding Mossy so ungrateful.

Young Pickwick suddenly stopped short, and looked about him anxiously.

"This is the place where we left Joey Snorter and the chaise, is it not?" he said.

"Yes," said Dick, also looking about with great anxiety.

But Joey Snorter and the doctor's chaise had vanished. At this moment the Diddler came running up to his schoolfellows.

"Had to make the best use of my legs," he cried; "left the gypsies in a ditch, jumped over, a tremendous leap—they thought it was nothing, tried to follow, in they went. Didn't I chuckle!"

"Now, what's to be done?" said young Pickwick.

"Get out of this as soon as possible," returned the Diddler. "Why, where's the chaise."

"Gone," said Dick. "Snorter made off with it."

"Then we must walk," said the Diddler; "do us good, make us grow, strengthen our legs, and so on."

Young Pickwick and Dick cheerfully assented.

But Mossy grumbled considerably at the prospect of a long walk.

"Hallos," said the Diddler, looking up at the sullen sky as they trudged along; "we shall have some rain presently."

He was not mistaken.

The rain soon fell heavily, and a vivid flash of lightning suddenly lit up the sky.

"I can't walk any further," cried Mossy Morton; "my feet ache."

"It is only six miles from home," said the Diddler; "keep up your pecker."

"I can't," returned Mossy; "don't I tell you I am dead beat?"

"You are a nice, lazy fellow—'pon honor," said the Diddler, indignantly; "are your legs made of brown paper?"

"You seem to forget how I have been knocked about to-night," returned Mossy Morton.

"So I did," said the Diddler; "very sorry—'pon honor."

"I dare say Mossy is tired," observed Dick; "let's retrace our steps a little, and take shelter in that large barn we passed just now until the storm is over."

"Agreed," cried young Pickwick, and the boys made for the barn.

They went up in the loft and made a bed of straw.

"Let's try and get a little sleep," said young Pickwick; "we may have some hard work before us when we reach home."

"Good advice—very," cried the Diddler, rolling over on his back; "I mean to follow it."

He was asleep in a minute.

The calm and regular breathing of the other boys soon proclaimed that they also slumbered.

(To be continued.)

"Young Pickwick's Schooldays" was commenced in No. 625.

A NIGHT IN A JUNGLE.

AN ADVENTURE UP THE GANGES.

WOULD you like to hear a story? It is purely a personal adventure that I met with during the great Sepoy rebellion in India. I was a junior lieutenant at the time, and had been ordered by the Commodore to take charge of a little schooner we had captured in the opium trade, and proceed up the Ganges as far as Canouge to look after the lives and interests of any American or European that might require assistance.

The *Alert*, as she was called, carried a heavy battery for a craft of her tonnage, and I had been allowed a passed midshipman as an assistant, while thirty picked seamen from the flagship formed my crew.

It was rather dull work lying there—no change, nothing to vary the monotony, and early one morning I resolved to take a look at the country. Mr. Fred Bolton, my assistant, or, more properly speaking, the executive officer of the *Alert*, expressed a wish to accompany me, and, leaving Mr. Midget, a young middie, in charge, we were pulled rapidly ashore.

I did not intend to remain longer than my breakfast hour, but thinking it possible that we might succeed in bagging a pheasant or something of the kind, we had provided ourselves with shot-guns, while a good navy-revolver dangled from our belts in case a more reliable weapon should be required.

A narrow belt of wood and shrubbery skirted the banks of the Ganges at the point where we landed, and, pushing our way through the underbrush and tall grass, we emerged on a wet, level marsh—not unlike one of our Southern rice-fields.

Beyond that rose a succession of hills, increasing in height as they rose inland, while around the base of the hillocks frowned a thick, dark, silent jungle.

The game proved abundant. We were both accident spectators, and midway between the jungle and bank of the river, up to our knees in mud, we were bagging the birds right and left, when a hoarse, discordant cry ringing out on the fresh morning breeze caused both myself and companion to look nervously about us.

Debouching from the fringe of woods skirting the bank of the river, a score of native cavalry were spurring toward us, splashing and floundering in the mud, which seriously impeded the progress of the horses.

The bright rays of the sun flashed on their accoutrements, and I could make out the dark-green uniforms laced with scarlet, which they wore.

"Well, Jack," said my companion, after a moment's silence, "those dark-skinned rascals evidently mean mischief. Shall we clear for action?"

"No, no, Fred—the odds are too great. There is only one thing to do. Gain the shelter of yonder jungle, and we may be able to give them the slip. Come on, we have an advantage over them, anyway. The mud and mire will bother their horses far more than it will us."

Clinging desperately to our guns we started off at the top of our speed, splashing and plunging along, our eyes fastened upon the moon-covered cover of the jungle, which was perhaps a mile distant.

The Sepoys, with shrill cries of rage and hate, urged on their smoking steeds, which plunged furiously as they sank in the soft ooze of the marsh.

Glancing over my shoulder from time to time, I noted the progress our pursuers made, and the conviction was forced upon me that we were losing ground. I could almost swear I saw the glitter of their savage eyes and demoniac expression of their swarthy features, as, sword in hand, they leaned over the necks of their horses, spurring and shouting as they floundered on.

But soon the animals grew restive and balky. They were forced to dismount and follow us on foot.

The rapid bang, bang of their carbines rang in our ears, followed by the sharp rip, rip of the conical balls, but beyond cutting off the top of the grass and throwing up the mud and water, no harm resulted from the fusillade.

"By Jupiter, Jack, I can run no further! My strength is all but gone."

And the poor middy turned his white face toward me with an expression that made even my heart grow faint.

"Nonsense, Fred; don't give up the ship; the ground grows harder, the grass is less high and troublesome, and in less than five minutes we will be under cover."

"I cannot! God help me, I have done my best. Leave me, Jack; you can yet escape; but don't leave my bones to whiten in this cursed marsh."

And with a low moan he sank at my feet.

I had no time to waste in words. The leader of the party, a huge Mahratta with mustaches long enough to excite the envy of a Turkish pasha, charged upon me, his keen sabre gleaming like a flash of lightning in the sun's rays.

He was pretty well exhausted as well as myself, and in his eagerness to deal me a decisive blow, the fellow lost sight of the tough grass writhing and twisting about his feet.

I avoided the blow by leaping aside, and he, falling heavily forward, lay completely at my mercy. In an instant my plan was formed.

His comrades, lacking the strength and determination of their leader, were kept some hundred yards distant.

Placing my revolver to the Sepoy's head, I bade him rise. Whether he understand English or not I am unable to say, but he obeyed. In the meanwhile Fred had improved his opportunity to recruit his wind and strength, and by my direction disarmed the surly native.

Using him as a breastwork, we slowly and leisurely retreated toward the jungle, while every forward or hostile movement of his comrades was checked by our revolvers pointed significantly to their leader's shaggy head.

The action was sufficiently expressive. The troopers halted in the midst of the marsh, unable to assist their comrade, who, foaming at the mouth with impotent raze, continued to do duty as a breastwork until the edge of the jungle was gained. Then, with a contemptuous kick from the middy, he was allowed to rejoin his friends; but the fellow, between a shriek and a howl, thundered forth his imprecations as he shook his clinched fist on high, while we lost no time in plunging into the thickest labyrinths of the jungle, where it was impossible for horse to follow or man to trace our footsteps.

It was terribly hot, and although the sun had mounted high in the heavens, its fiercest rays failed to penetrate the rank, luxuriant foliage of the Indian forest. But the air, sluggish and hot as the breath from a furnace, afforded us no relief as we struggled forward, scarcely heeding what direction we pursued so long as a respectable distance intervened between us and the dusky cavalrymen whom we had so cleverly outwisted.

The wavy, feathery jungle-grass was so long in some places that it might have hid an elephant, and I did not know what moment we might come in contact with a tiger, a leopard, or the deadly cobra capello, all of whom infest the jungles and swamps of that vast country.

"I am all but suffocated," murmured Fred, as he sank down beneath the wide-spreading branches of a banyan-tree, the perspiration streaming from his sunburnt face, while his uniform as well as my own had come out second best in the scramble through the thorns and briers of the jungle.

"It is, indeed, hot, and with no prospect of iced wines, no tatty-wallah to drench the mattings and cool the air, no punkah or hookah, not a drink of even pure water. But we must endure it as best we can, Fred. It will not be safe or prudent to attempt leaving here before evening. Then, under cover of the darkness, we will sally forth, strike the bank of the Ganges, and regain the *Alert*. I wonder what the lads will think of our long absence?"

"Oh, Midget will borrow no trouble. He is asleep by this time in his hammock, comfortably swinging to the morning breeze beneath the quarterdeck awning."

"Well, Fred, I think a little nap will do us no harm, and we shall forget our troubles. Have your revolver ready, although I anticipate no danger."

Overcome by the great heat and oppressive atmosphere of the forest, as well as the exciting chase we had undergone, our sleep must have been long and profound.

I awoke with a start, an undefinable something, a sensation of danger, pervading my entire being, and glanced at the form of my companion lying a few yards distant, calmly sleeping on a pile of grass and leaves he had scraped together, and coiled close by his side, with its diabolical head erect, its eyes glaring like yellow topazes and its crimson mouth open, was a snake, and the bristling head proclaimed it at once as the cobra, the most venomous reptile that infests India.

A cold thrill of terror passed over me as I mechanically seized my pistol; but, as the head, angry and threatening, drew back as if to make the fatal spring, my nerves again resumed their wonted firmness. I took a steady, deliberate aim, pulled the trigger, and with the report Fred started up with a cry of alarm, while at the feet writhed the loathsome reptile, its glittering body nearly severed by the pistol-ball.

It effectually banished all desire for sleep from our brains, while, for fear that the pistol-shot might have reached the keen ears of some lurking foe, we again plunged into the depths of the jungle, which gradually assumed a more cleared aspect, while the deepening shadows of night crept tremulously through the deep aisles and vast solitude of the forest.

Suddenly we came upon a grove—at least, it might have been once, judging from the regular order the trees had been planted, and there, amid the tamarind, the mango, the cassia and the fanlike foliage of the drooping palm, rose the dark, sombre ruins of an old and extensive Hindoo temple.

The sun had set with its usual Indian rapidity; day had suddenly given place to night, and the clear, round moon, like a mighty pearl set in blue enamel, flooded the scene with a shimmering halo of light.

A huge tank in the midst of fallen pillars and blocks of granite was discovered by Fred, who was burning with thirst and inward fever, and stooping to drink on the edge of the stone coping, he jumped aside barely in time to escape the sweeping blow of a huge, alligator, who disappeared, with a splash, in the slimy depths of the stagnant pool.

"Jack! I believe I am destined to leave my bones in the midst of this cursed jungle. That is the second narrow escape I have had, to say nothing of the Sepoys. I wonder what will come next?"

"A safe deliverance, I hope. But come, cheer up; try one of these mangoes, they are truly refreshing. But, see, we had your share of danger; perhaps my turn will come next."

An hour passed wearily by, and, without venturing to penetrate into the dark, yawning depths of the ruin, we sat down on the moss-covered steps, listening to the shrieking of jackals, the croak of cannibal birds, and the hoarse howl of a pariah-dog.

"Pleasant and lively," muttered Fred, as he thrashed about to rid himself of the myriads of musquitoes hovering about. "Come, Jack, what do you say, shall we forward and leave the dismal hole astern?"

I was on the point of assenting, thinking that it would now be safe to leave the cover of the jungle, when the oppressive silence was broken by a sudden rush of feet and trampling of horses. The hum of voices and the glare of torches glancing from amid the surrounding jungle filled me with alarm and apprehension. Darting up the steps I pressed forward into the depths of the temple, calling upon Fred to follow.

A ray of moonlight, penetrating through a rift above, disclosed a species of gallery, and swinging myself up to the shelter, I sank down, realizing for the first time that I was alone.

Fred had disappeared, but where?

On came the moving mass, crashing the dead trees, branches, and dried grass under feet: the clatter of arms and accoutrements fell harshly on my ear as the horsemen dismounted, advancing into the temple.

The glare of the torches brought out in bold relief the horrible and grotesque carvings of the ruin, the twisted pillars, seven-headed snakes and triple-headed gods, who grinned and stared from all sides in the wavering, ghastly light, with their thick, flabby lips, depressed noses, staring eyes and girdles of lotus-leaves.

The temple was filled with a swarthy and ferocious crowd of men in turbans, with vests and trousers of every hue under the sun, and on some a leopard's skin partially covered their dirty brown hides, displaying sinewy arms and legs, merry bone and muscle. They were armed with every species of weapon known to India, while their numbers embraced Hindoos with the trident of Vishnu on their brows, Bheels, Kindaies the lowest outcasts of India—the whole motley assemblage were known as Dacoits, the robbers and brigands of India.

A woman's voice, a cry for mercy, mingled with the infernal jargon of the bronzed natives, rising clearly above the babel of tongues, and striking upon my ear with an intensity I shall never forget.

Kneeling at the foot of an immense god, her dress torn and long hair streaming down her back, was the figure of an Englishwoman, young, and, despite the mortal paleness of her features—across which the lurid glare of the torches cast a ghastly tint—handsome. Her hands were clasped in supplication, but the brown, sturdy, and half-naked wretch who held her captive listened with a smile of ferocious joy playing about his leathery features.

In wild, guttural accents, he replied in Hindoostance, and a shout of savage exultation burst from the throats of the Dacoits, accompanied by a waving of torches as he completed his unintelligible harangue.

A tall sepoy stepped forward, and in a deep, stern voice he addressed the lady in her own language.

"You have been preserved from outrage and violence that you might be offered up as a sacrifice and tribute to the sacred alligator, which in secret places above Siva, the god of destruction. But first you are to be purified by fire. See, it is already being kindled, and from its embers you will issue forth pure and cleansed, a fit offering for Mador, who inhabits the pool of water."

In my excitement and anxiety to hear what the sentence of the poor, shrinking woman was, I had risen to my feet, the dark background forming ample security for my person.

What would I have not given to have had fifteen or twenty of my brave lads there, with cutlasses ground sharp as razors, or a few boarding-pikes with points like needles! But alas! I was alone, my heart filled with apprehension at the strange disappearance of Fred, and I could only wait and watch at the time riped for help.

A huge fire had been kindled, around which the Dacoits marched in solemn order chanting a low, monotonous tone. Then, with a sudden yell, the leader darted forward, seized the trembling form of the victim, who was nearly insensible, dragged her toward the glowing circle, around which the Dacoits were revolving like so many fiends.

My blood was at fever-heat. I could not look tamely on and see a lady murdered and I not lift a hand to her defense. I felt for my revolver; horror of horrors, it was gone—nothing but the empty frog dangled from my belt! How I lost it I never could account, unless it dropped from its sheath when I was crawling through some brambly hedge of the jungle.

My light sporting gun had been abandoned hours before as useless encumbrance, but I had one resource left.

Detaching my powder-flask, which held over three pounds of powder, I dropped it in the midst of the flames, and running along the gallery, gained a point directly over the captive lady.

At the same time with a mingled roar the powder exploded, scattering fire, wood, masonry and natives in all directions, while a dense cloud of smoke filled every portion of the temple, from which issued the wild yells and affrighted cries of the singed Dacoits scrambling in every direction, seized with a panic which I need to my own advantage.

It was but the work of a moment to clear the low stone coping; the white dress of the lady, now wholly insensible, gleamed before me, and, seizing her in my arms, I rushed from the ruin, down the steps, gained the side of a horse which had broken loose, rearing and plunging with fright.

Embarrassed with the dead weight in my arms, I made several ineffectual attempts to mount the animal. I was in the full strength of the moonlight, the Dacoits on every side of me, but in their excitement they had as yet passed me by unnoticed. How I might have finally succeeded I know not, but with a snort of terror the horse reared, sprang forward, dragging me under his hoofs, and lady, Dacoits and ruins, all faded from my sight.

When I recovered my consciousness, I found my feet and hands had been securely lashed, and that I was lying side by side with the lady whom I had attempted to rescue.

She was also conscious of what was going on around us, and while the Dacoits were bustling angrily to and fro, I found an opportunity to address a few words to my fair companion in misery. I told who and what I was, together with the unsuccessful attempt I had made to rescue her from the power of the jungle fiends.

In return, in a low, sweet voice, she told me she was the wife, but lately wedded, of Major Archibald, of the Royal Fusiliers; that she had been captured through the treachery and duplicity of her Hindoo servants, and that she was sorry I had sacrificed my life for one already doomed.

I attempted a word of consolation, but was cut short by a pair of sturdy fellows, who dragged me forth toward the entrance to the temple.

Surrounded on all sides by the dark-skinned, howling wretches, I wondered what fate had in store for me, as my hands were cut.

A sharp prod from a tulwar admonished me that they meant business, and would admit of no delay. I walked on in the direction of the pool, upon the brink of which the party halted.

Just at that instant the first blush of dawn tinted the heavens with a rosy hue, the stars paled before the rapid advance of day, and thousands of feathered songsters broke into melody.

A prayer rose to my lips as I found myself confronted by the Dacoit leader—he of the filthy appearance and ragged leopard-skin hanging from his shoulders.

His voice all but rose into a screech as he talked and gesticulated. Not a word of his jargon did I understand, but in the midst of it I beheld a ripple and commotion in the slimy depths beneath me, and with a shudder I could not repress, I watched the huge alligator, his immense jaws opened to their widest extent, slowly emerge from his muddy bed in search of prey.

The Dacoits had fallen back, listening in wrapt attention to the no doubt interesting eulogy their leader was delivering.

We alone were standing upon the edge of the horrible pond.

The fellow had partially turned his side toward me, and, nerved on by desperation, with a yearning for vengeance—for I had long since given up all hope of life—I concentrated all my remaining strength into one vigorous kick, planting my heavy boot full in the Dacoit's stomach.

With a half-stifled roar of pain and mingled terror the elocutionist shot out from the brink, falling headlong into the very jaws of the monster, who, lashing the water furiously with his muscular tail, disappeared in the oozy, miry depths of the pond.

A mass of foam, with streaks of blood, remained upon the surface, the last that was ever seen of him, and I did not perceive that the sacred alligator objected to this mode of sacrifice, even if the cleansing process of fire had been omitted.

I was fully prepared to meet the wrath and vengeance of the Dacoits, who for a moment stood paralyzed at the unexpected and terrible death of their leader. Then, as they drew their weapons to annihilate me, I took a last look at the bright, beautiful earth.

Before a Dacoit could reach me, a rattling volley of musketry rang out sharp and clear, and from amid the cover of the old grove, I beheld my own brave blue-jackets, charging on the motley throng, their cutlasses gleaming with a welcome lustre in the rays of the morning sun just peeping above the trees surrounding the jungle.

Some yards in advance, his cutlass stained with the life-blood of more than one native, I recognized Fred.

The middy uttered a loud shout of joy as he recognized me, but before he gained by my side I had fainted.

The revulsion was too much for me. As I said before, I was prepared for death, and had made up my mind to face the inevitable.

Well, the remainder of my story in soon told.

Fred, it appears, had become bewildered as well as myself when the Dacoits first made their appearance in the old ruins, and instead of following me, he retreated to the jungle, kept on, pushing his way through all obstacles, until he reached the banks of the Ganges. The welcome tone of the *Alert* bell sounded like the sweetest music in his ears, and no time was lost in gaining her deck.

The energetic middy was soon piloting the greater portion of the crew back to my relief, with what success the reader is already aware.

As for the lady, she remained on board the *Alert* until able to rejoin her husband, and to this day I have no warmer, more devoted friends than Colonel and Mrs. Archibald. Their oldest son is named after me, as a slight appreciation, as they are pleased to term it, of the services I rendered.

THE MYSTIC THREE.

SHOWING WHAT HAPPENED TO THREE BOYS WHO BELIEVED ALL THEY READ.

By PIERCE CUTTING.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

A SERIOUS JOKE.

THE man started back with an exclamation of alarm, and laid his hand on the revolver in his belt.

When Gid saw this he believed his last hour had really come.

With a scream of consternation he bounded to his feet, intending to jump out of the car.

But his action was construed into an aggressive one.

Every one of the drovers felt certain that he was about to leap among them.

So they fell back before him, as if he had been a mad dog, drawing their revolvers and covering him with them.

Thus the unlucky Devastator was kept at bay at one end of the caboose, while his tormentors crowded to the other.

He cast a last despairing and appealing glance at his friends.

But saw at once that he could hope for no help from them.

They were actually choking with laughter.

"Only wait," murmured Gid, hoarsely; "I'll get even with you yet."

And he shook his fist at them with fury.

"There!" exclaimed one of the drovers. "He's working himself up again."

"Never mind," observed another; "we've got him covered. If he moves, he's a gone coon."

"A gone coon, you mean," said Hack. "But what are you going to do with him?"

"That's what we was going to tell you when he got his back up so suddint."

"What was it?"

"It's plain we can't trust ourselves with him."

"Well?"

"So we was going to say this——"

"Say it."

"Suppose we tie him up good and tight?"

"Yes."

"That'll keep him safe till we git to Saint Looey, to-morrow."

"And then?"

"Why, then, we can send him to an asylum."

"Do what?" screamed Gid, finding voice in his extremity.

"Send you to an asylum."

"A lunatic asylum!"

"Just so."

"But I ain't crazy."

"Of course not."

"I ain't a bit crazier than you are."

"We know it."

"Gentlemen, I'm not half as crazy as those two there."

And he pointed to Hack and Gid, who exclaimed, together:

"There! You hear that?"

"Of course we do," answered the drovers.

"Don't that prove it?"

"Prove what?"

"What we said."

"About what?"

"About his being crazy."

"But he says he ain't."

"That's exactly it. All lunatics believe everybody's crazy but themselves."

There was a murmur of assent at this.

Everybody had heard this theory broached, and they believed it to a man.

Gid, seeing his last hope slipping from him, made a last effort.

"Gentlemen," he said, as calmly as he could, "I want you to listen to me."

"Certainly," replied every one, only too willing to humor the supposed maniac.

"I want to talk reasonably to you."

"To be sure."

"And quietly."

"Of course."

"And sensibly."

"We know it."

"And I want you to listen to me."

"Well, we are, ain't we?"

"Do I talk like a fellow that's insane?"

"No."

"Do I act like one?"

"Not now."

"Well, is there anything I can do to prove to you that I'm not crazy? Mind, I'll do anything you ask."

"Will you?"

"I swear it."

"Then stand on your head."

Gid complied, promptly.

He could not very clearly see how his standing on his head would prove his sanity, but he hoped, by ready obedience to the most extravagant commands, to prove his clear-headedness.

So he stood on his head till he felt his brains almost gushing out of his ears.

His tormentors, who only desired to tire him out and so master him easier, kept him at it till he grew crimson in the face.

Then one commanded:

"Turn a somersault."

Gid did so.

"Walk on your ear."

That feat was likewise performed.

"Now stand up."

Gid stood up.

"Whistle 'Yankee Doodle.'"

He whistled till his throat began to crack.

"Dance a double-shuffle."

He danced till the heels came off his shoes.

"Sing 'Grandfather's Clock.'"

The dismal notes of that melancholy melody promptly followed this demand.

By the time he had finished Gideon Goble was completely used up.

He had no more strength in him than a sick cat.

Or a broken-legged bullfrog.

Or a baby with the colic.

All he could do was stand and gasp.

And he stood and gasped like an expiring codfish.

Now this was just the condition his enemies desired to have him in.

Being completely exhausted, he could make no show of resistance.

So now they swooped down on him.

Like a flock of condors pouncing on a poor, trembling lamb, they descended on the unlucky Gid in a swarm.

He disappeared from the view of his chuckling associates in the mass of struggling arms and legs.

The car filled with dust kicked up by the shuffling feet, and from time to time the cloud was pierced by shouts and shrill cries for mercy.

People along the line of road must have started up in their beds, just then, believing a train full of crazy wilds beasts was passing by.

When the tumult subsided, a painful spectacle was revealed.

Or one which must have been painful to Gideon Goble, at least. Very much so.

Bound with a couple of hundred feet of stout rope till he looked like a mummy, Gid lay at the far end of the car on the floor.

To make him additionally secure, his captors had passed the end of the cord through a staple in the wall of the car.

"There," observed the man who had been called Dave Reilly, surveying their work with considerable satisfaction, "I guess he'll do."

"A elephant couldn't burst loose from that," remarked another.

"No, nor a camel."

"Nor a lngine."

"Nor a Texas steer, which for bustin' loose they beats all."

"I'd contract to tie a hill drove on 'em up that way, an' they wouldn't stir half nor horn."

In point of fact, they had made a good job of it.

Nothing short of a miracle could unloose Gideon Goble.

So he was rattled helplessly on toward St. Louis and the lunatic asylum, while his captors calmly stretched themselves out and went to sleep.

Even Simeon Walsingham Pugsley and Hackaliah Snick slumbering without a reproachful vision.

CHAPTER LXXV.

HACKALIAH SNICK'S DREAM.

THE train sped on. It rattled and jolted across switches and crossings, rumbled over bridges and clattered along through the rain and mist that now obscured the night for hours.

The drovers, coiled up on the rude seats in all imaginable attitudes, slept the sleep of the just.

Or the unjust, when they don't happen to be troubled with nightmares.

So did the Mystic Three.

Or, rather, two of them did.

The third only wanted a chance to do so, but he wanted it in vain.

Gideon Goble lay in the position in which his persecutors had left him.

Bound in the toils, he had no choice but to submit patiently to the evil fortune that fate had brought him.

But he groaned mentally, nevertheless.

And that was about all the good it did him.

However, for lack of anything better to do, he kept on groaning.

It was during one of the small hours of the night that Hackaliah Snick was suddenly and unpleasantly aroused from his slumbers.

He was dreaming that he was traversing a dense jungle in India, keeping a sharp lookout for tigers, elephants, leopards, boa-constrictors, and such small game, when a beautiful green snake suddenly appeared in his path.

With lightning celerity the bold Devastator struck a furious blow at the serpent. And missed him!

The reptile was a better marksman. With a sudden lunge and the accuracy of a Creedmoor rifleman, the snake fastened upon his leg.

Then Hackaliah gave a wild yell of despair.

And awoke.

To find himself lying on the floor of the caboose, with a sensation of intense pain proceeding from his leg.

It took him about five minutes to wake up sufficiently to realize where he was and what had happened to him.

Then, as he sat up and looked about, he heard a familiar voice.

It was that of Gideon Goble.

And it remarked:

"Have you woke up, Mr. Snick?"

"I should think I had."

"You woke suddenly."

"So would you, if it happened to you."

"If what happened to me?"

"Something biting you."

"What's biting you?"

"That's just what I want to know. Bugs, I suppose."

"Indeed!"

"Or fleas, maybe."

"That's so."

"Or they might be musquitoes.

"Well, why don't you find out for sure?"

"How am I going to find out?"

"By asking, of course."

"Asking the bugs?"

"No."

"Who, then?"

"Somebody that knows."

"But who?"

"Me, for instance."

"Asking you?"

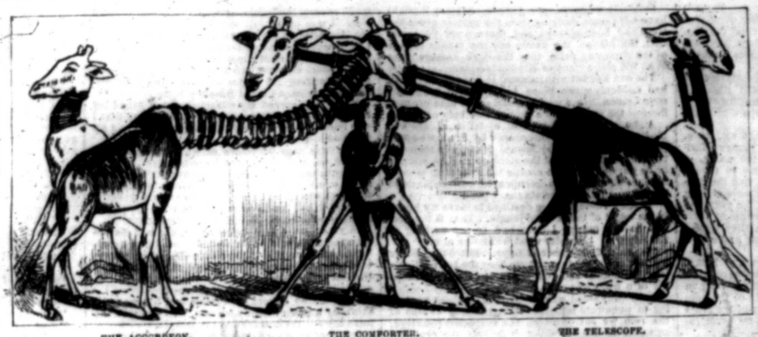
"Yes, me."

"What good will that do?"

"Lots."

"How so?"

"Because I'll tell you."



THE ACCORDEON. THE COMFORTER. THE TELESCOPE.

EDISON OUTDONE BY THE PRICKLY OSTRICH.

NATURAL-HISTORY NOVELTIES.

"You'll tell me what bit me?"

"I will."

"Why in creation don't you do it, then?"

"Because you haven't done me the honor to ask me."

"Well, I ask you now."

"And I answer, give me time and I will explain all."

"What do you want, a month?"

"Oh, no, an hour or two will do for me."

"I wish it would."

"Wish it would what?"

"Do for you."

"Don't try to be funny, Mr. Snick; it's too hard work for you, and it may make you sick."

"You think so?"

"I do that, for all I'm worth."

"The bet is too small."

"Make it larger, then."

"I will."

"What do you call it?"

"I'll bet half that I know against all you don't know, with large odds in my favor."

"Don't break yourself, Mr. Goble."

"I don't want to," responded Gid, with a groan.

"What do you want to do, then?"

"I want to get loose from this rope, and if you fellows were any good, you'd help me out."

"We will."

"Do it, then, and don't let me lie her wrapped up like a mummy."

"Wait a little."

"What for?"

"For several reasons."

"What are they?"

"In the first place, I want to know what bit me."

"You do?"

"Sure."

"Well, it wasn't a bug."

"Indeed?"

"Nor a flea."

"Do tell."

"Nor a musquito."

"Well, I never! Was it a bulldog, then?"

"It was not."

"Then what was it?"

"Me."

"You?"

"Yes, I."

"Do you mean to say, Gideon Goble, that you bit me in the leg?"

"I not only mean to, but I do say it. And what's more——"

"What?"

"I'd do it over again."

Hackaliah pulled up his pants and examined the afflicted portion of his anatomy.

Too find the very distinct impression of a set of excellent teeth imprinted on the calf of his dexter leg.

"Did you do that?" he demanded, angrily, glaring upon the unhappy captive with baleful eyes.

"I did, messmate."

"And what for?"

"To wake you up."

"Couldn't you manage to wake me up without chewing me into hash?"

"I tried my best, but it was no good; you snored away like one of the seven sleepers."

"What did you want to wake me up for, then?"

"Can't you guess?"

"I don't intend to try, with you to tell me."

"So that you could untie me, then."

"Well, choke me with a turnip if you ain't a daisy."

"What am I a daisy for?"

"For cheek."

"I don't see any cheek about it."

"You don't?"

"Not a morsel. It was teeth."

And Gid grinned a fiendish grin.

"Well, if strikes me that you've got an entire cargo concealed somewhere about your person," responded Hack, indignantly.

"You think so?"

"I just do, every time."

"Perhaps you will be good enough, Mr. Snick, to explain yourself?"

"Well, any fellow that will bite a friend into bits, just to wake him up for the selfish purpose of getting himself out of a hole, must have more cheek than a cast-iron mule, and I guess you've got it," said Hack, rubbing his leg tenderly.

"Well, never mind that, Hack; for gracious goodness sake untie me, or cut me loose, or something," responded Gid, appealingly.

"What'll I do that for?" asked Hack.

"To save my life."

"That's the very reason I oughtn't to."

"Because I'm suffering, and it's your duty to release me, then."

"Oh, it is, is it?"

"Of course it is."

"Well, duty or no duty ——"

"What?"

"I ain't going to do it, all the same."

"Why not?"

"Because you're dangerous."

"What am I dangerous for?" inquired Gid.

"Didn't you try to massacre us all?"

"Certainly not."

"It looked like it, anyway."

"Look here, Hackaliah Snick," exclaimed Gid, wrathfully, "a joke's a joke, but this is carrying it too far."

"It's the train that's carrying you, not me."

"Are you going to let me loose, or not?"

"I am not, my gay gazelle."

"And why not?"

"Because I don't dare to."

"What are you afraid of?"

"Why, these men here think you're crazy."

"Well, suppose they do? You know I'm not."

"I always thought you were a little off, Mr. Goble."

"If I was half as looney as you are I'd hunt a lunatic asylum without losing a minute," responded Gid, indignantly.

"Well, you may not be dangerous, but I can't risk untying you."

"You can't?"

"I won't, say way."

"Why not?"

"These fellows would chuck me off the train if I did."

"They would?"

"Certainly they would."

"And you won't untie me?"

"You can put up your entire body on it."

"Then will you wake up Puggy?"

"What for?"

"He may not be so hard-hearted as you are."

"You'll find him a great deal worse, I reckon; but I'll start him, if that'll do you any good."

And he shook him rudely.

With no other result than that of extracting a heavy grunt or two from the somnolent scalp-

TALKS WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—SCENE OFF THE COAST OF ICELAND.

buster. Finding his mild measures ineffectual, he resorted to violent ones.

He gave the sleeping member of the trio a kick in the ribs that would have roused a brazen image. And Simeon Walsingham Pugsley, thus suddenly disturbed in his dreams of warfare with the savage Sioux, uttered a howl of pain, and sat up and glared at them with half-shut eyes.

Just as the train, with much creaking of brakes, came to a full stop, and a loud voice outside cried out: "St. Louis!"

(To be continued.)

"The Mystic Three" was commenced in No. 677.

Natural History Novelties.

I.—OF THE GIRAFFE AS A PET.

FATE once won me a Giraffe in a Giraffe, and I took it home. When I got it there—it was in the dusk, and the boys assisted in pushing it along under the impression that it was a new style of fire-escape—I began to experience difficulties. A pig is at home in a parlor; a dog curls up in a corner; and I knew a man who kept a cow in an attic, and it walked up and downstairs like a lady. I have known more than one house with more than one donkey in it; but—a Giraffe! You have no idea how cornery the beast is. Get him in at the front door, and his head is out at the back staircase window. Coax him to lie down, and he squats broad with legs in four rooms at once. There is no roll-up or squeeze down, or economic stowing power in him. His angles are so many and so uncomfortable, that any attempt to double him up into neat compactness would have puzzled Euclid himself.

WALTER EAGLETON, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 35, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

But it was that confounded neck of his which rendered him so uncomfortable in a house. It was not only far too long, but so stubborn. When it was suggested that if the animal were stabled in the kitchen, its neck might be got up the chimney, and it could then be conveniently fed from the roof (it was pleasant Summer weather), one trial proved the fact that this was impracticable, and could only result in the animal's breaking off the chimney, and carrying it about with him as a necklet.

Observations made at that period of Giraffication convinced me that to fit the animal as a domestic pet several structural alterations, involving a general redistribution of its anatomy, would be necessary. The neck is the main difficulty, and that must be got over in one of three ways. These would yield us:

1. The Accordion Giraffe, useful and beautiful, without being necessarily musical.

2. The Telescopic Giraffe, especially calculated for the meridian of Greenwich; a tractable animal, easily "shut up."

3. The Contorter variety, strongly recommended for family use. The neck in this case is coiled round and round, and would be specially comforting to the animal in the event of sore throat of which it is liable to have so much at a time. Without these alterations I despair of the Giraffe as a family pet. In my own case it was a question whether I should set my beauty at large, with the fervent hope that he might run away, or should slaughter him for his skin.

Scoffing neighbors summarized the position as one of *Giraffe-fee* and *Giraffe-fay*.

II.—THE PRICKLY OSTRICH.

The showman who traverses the country with a menagerie often has a hard time of it, owing to the public craving for new animals with "sensation" points about them, the supply of which is naturally limited. Nature is ever ready to oblige the deserving showman; but her ingenuity would seem to have been pretty well exhausted by incessant effort in abnormal directions.

The ingenuity of man in the way of happy suggestion is, however, always readily complied with, and of this my friend Giggleswick has afforded me a pleasing illustration. Finding himself with his show at a village which had been overdone with zoology, as villages will be after repeated exhibitions of the ordinary kind, he saw that the time was come when he must make an effort. The animals were eating their heads off, and in spite of this in itself curious anatomical feat, on view daily, not a penny was coming in.

In this dilemma a happy idea occurred to him. Bearing in mind the fondness of the ostrich for delicacies of a ferruginous nature, he procured from a shop in the village several dozens of nails, of the variety known as tenpenny. These tempting morsels were duly strewn in the ostrich compartment, and the bird, with glistening eyes and ravenous appetite, set about devouring them, until not a nail remained.

Giggleswick allowed a day or two for digestion.

Then he approached the ostrich, armed with several powerful magnets, of which he had obtained the loan, and by applying these to the back and sides of the bird, he succeeded, as he anticipated, in producing a very remarkable effect. The nails, acted upon by the magnet, penetrated through the skin and feathers of the bird, and produced an appearance resembling that of a cross between the hedgehog and the porcupine.

The effect was pointed in the extreme, and without hesitation, Giggleswick christened his novelty the prickly ostrich.

The announcement of this wonder attracted crowds at a shilling ahead. The place was crowded.

Giggleswick had to open a special prickly ostrich account at the local bank, and in after days he was never tired of recounting his experience of the reluctant natives and how he nailed 'em.

THE CONQUEST OF ILLINOIS IN 1777.—MAJOR CLARK AND HIS SOLDIERS CROSSING THE WABASH.—SEE PAGE 350.

Distinguished Scholars of Brooklyn (N. Y.) Schools.

WALTER EAGLETON,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 35, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

WALTER EAGLETON is a bright and studious pupil of the Intermediate Department of Grammar School No. 35, Brooklyn, N. Y. He was born June 30th, 1863, making him sixteen years of age. He is the son of John and Helen Eagleton. When about eight years old he began going to a private school in Brooklyn, and finally became a pupil in the third intermediate class of No. 35. We found him a diligent and advancing member of the first class of the same department. He is an amiable and intelligent boy. He was a little excited when we saw him, from the fact of his selection from among his fellow-pupils for this public notice, but we readily saw that he was a boy to be relied upon in school and out of it. His Principal spoke of him as a "good boy" and a "smart boy," two designations which describe him not only as he is, but as he tries, with his whole personal efforts, to be at all times. His teachers find him a thoroughly interested scholar, and his improvement at this date is so decided that they have no doubt of his continued success in the higher branches. He has a large head and an expressive face. He is working hard for knowledge, with an ambition which is more and more prompted as he realizes the great value of an education.

NELLIE DUGAN,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 3, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

NELLIE DUGAN is a pupil of the first division of the first class of Grammar School No. 3, Brooklyn, N. Y. She is presented here as a shining example of the scholarship among the female pupils of that fine school. The teacher of the class came to us specially to say that Miss Dugan was now making one hundred per cent. in her studies. She is such a beautiful character, and so successful in study that it is evidently a great pleasure for the teachers to see her merits fully recognized. She was born in Brooklyn, June 2d, 1863, making her sixteen years of age. She is the daughter of Thomas and Emma Dugan. Beginning at the age of seven years, she attended a private school for about two years, and then entered the Primary Department of No. 3. She has been at the head of classes and skipped classes. Studying with zeal and intelligence at the outset, she has never abated in either of those particulars, but pressed on with constant triumphs. Her mind is naturally clear, and she has an excellent memory. Her lessons are perfectly learned, and she understands them. Her face is always bright, her spirits cheerful, and her manners amiable. While she has taken a leading place in the scholarship of each class, she has been popular with her classmates, for her talents are such that they reflect equal honor upon her and her school.

NELLIE DUGAN, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 3, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

A TERRIBLE FIGHT FOR LIFE BETWEEN E. HARRING AND A SIBERIAN BLOODHOUND.—SEE PAGE 350.

Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

ICELAND.

OF course you have all heard of a large island in the North Atlantic called Iceland, and perhaps it may interest a few of you to hear something in connection with the said island.

Iceland is subject to the Danish crown, and forms part of the Western Hemisphere. The population of Iceland in its most flourishing period exceeded 100,000, though its capital, Reykiavik, has a population of only 1,400.

The coast line on the south is but little broken, several of its openings having been filled up during eruptions of the neighboring volcanoes. The best harbors are those of Reykiavik in the south-

west, Hafnarfiord, in the west, Akureyri in the north, and Vopnafiord in the south.

One of the most remarkable features of the island is the presence of one of the largest volcanoes, or burning mountains, on the globe. This mountain is called Hecla, and rises to the height of 5,104 feet. The top of the mountain is nearly flat, forming a broad table a quarter of a mile long, by fifty rods across. The ground feels warm, and on digging to the depth of six inches, smoke bursts forth, and smoking heaps of lava are scattered over the surface. Hecla is always burning, but sometimes it bursts forth with terrible fury.

For instance, on April 6th, 1766, enormous columns of ashes were discharged, accompanied with thunder and lightning, and in the space of two hours destroyed five farm-houses.

On April 9th a stream of lava poured down toward the southwest. On 21st the column of ashes from the main craters rose to a height of 17,000 feet. Continuous and disastrous shocks of earthquake accompanied the eruption. Epidemic, or violent and catching diseases, raged among human beings and cattle, and great quantities of snow fell, accompanied by storms from the northwest, which lasted a week.

The climate of Iceland seems to have changed greatly since its first settlement. The ice-drifts from Greenland, which formerly visited its shores only every other year, have of late years come for fifteen years in succession, surrounding the island with a compact mass, and remaining there from three to five months.

Iceland is almost a treeless country; in certain spots are low coppices of birch, the trees being more shrubs ten or twelve feet high. Hay raised in the lowlands is the chief crop. A few patches of corn are occasionally seen in sheltered situations, but even these do not always ripen.

No other kind of grain is raised, but a species of wild corn growing on the sand flats by the sea affords a rough-haired harvest. This straw is used for thatching and fodder, and the meal, flavored with cinnamon, is made into very nice, stiff cakes. Potatoes, carrots, cabbage, lettuce, spinach, parsley, cresses and radishes are cultivated in small patches.

Domestic animals constitute the great wealth of the Icelander, and the early colonists introduced geese and swine; but the geese are now all wild, and the hog has disappeared.

The men are tall, fair-complexioned and blue-eyed, with frames hardened by constant exposure to the weather; and the women are healthy, industrious and chaste.

There is nothing in the whole island that can be called a road; no carriage of any kind is used on land. A few houses are of stone, a few of wood, but the greater part are of turf and lava-blocks, pointed with moss and thatched with sod. The main staple of food is stockfish, which is eaten with rancid butter. The only meat is mutton, which is boiled, then pressed dry, cut into lumps, and laid by without salt; sometimes it is also stewed in milk.

At some future period we will tell you a little more about Iceland, but we do not want to tire you by giving you too much at once.

THE CONQUEST OF ILLINOIS IN 1777.

THE conquest of the Illinois country from the English, by Major George Roger Clarke, was one of the most important, as well as the most intrepid, operations of the Revolution. The English Government had acquired complete authority in the West, as the old French forts were held by British regulars, and all the arms and supplies were issued to the Indians in the name of the British monarch. The red men, who had so often met the settlers of the American borders in deadly contest, rallied around the English standard, ready to carry out any bloody work. Congress and the Commander-in-chief of the American forces were too absorbed with the operations in the East to think of sending a force into the Western wilds, where a fate worse than Braddock's might well be expected.

Major Clarke, alive to the importance of breaking the British power in the West, fretted and fumed at the state of affairs. Long planning at last made him confident of success. In December, 1777, he submitted a plan of campaign to the Virginia Legislature.

His project was received with favor, and a small amount appropriated to defray the expenses. Early in the Spring four companies of picked men met at Corn Island, near the Falls of the Ohio. They floated down in boats to a spot to become famous in military affairs a century later, Paducah. Here hunters gave them tidings of the state of affairs at Kaskaskia.

Leaving their boats, they struck through the woods, and on the fourth day of July reached the outskirts of the old French town. Waiting till night came to favor their operations, they silently dashed into the sleeping-place and made the first anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence glorious by the capture of the town and garrison, the commander, Major Rochebleave, being captured in his bed. His quick-witted wife began to destroy his papers, but enough were seized to show his complicity in many a massacre of the exposed settlers.

Sending him to Virginia, Clarke, aided by the Rev. Mr. Gibault, the priest of the place, an ardent sympathizer with America, won over the French settlers heartily to the cause. By their aid, and Gibault's advice, he reduced Cahokia, and the priest went to Vincennes, where he gained over the French to the American side. But before they could be supported, Governor Hamilton marched into the place with a considerable force from Detroit.

The entire success of Clarke's campaign now depended on a prompt and complete reduction of Hamilton's post. The Illinois country was flooded with water. He was without funds, with an insignificant force, but he resolutely undertook the task. For a whole week he marched through the drowned lands, suffering every privation from wet, cold and hunger.

At the Wabash the points of dry land were five miles apart, but his hardy soldiers waded through the snow-cold flood, sometimes up to their armpits. Just as they reached dry land near Vincennes they captured a resident, and sent him in with a demand for an immediate surrender. Hamilton refused. Clarke attacked the place so furiously that Hamilton, supposing he had an overpowering force before him, surrendered after fourteen hours of fighting, and the whole garrison became prisoners-of-war. The American flag was again run up, and the decisive blow had been struck that saved the West for the United States.

THE one suit—Our last robe needs no pockets.

Rob Rollalong, the Runaway.

By BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG,

AUTHOR OF THE "JACK HARKAWAY" AND "DICK LIGHT-HEART" STORIES, ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

[Continued from page 338.]

THE professor again entered the cave, and this time advanced more boldly. If he had been startled before, he was destined to be more so.

Suddenly he heard a deep groan.

A groan of awful intensity.

"Santa Clause!" cried the professor. "What's that?"

More groans.

The professor was not superstitious, far from it, but these groanings sent a chill to his heart, and he fairly trembled in the awful solitude of that vast cave.

"Who's that?" he said, in tremulous accents.

"A friend," replied a voice.

"What friend?"

"I'm a white man, about as white as they make them, and if you're of my color and one of the boys, you'll find Jack Johnson a helping hand."

"What's the matter with you? Are you hurt?"

"No, I'm a prisoner, kept here by Rob Rollalong and his gang. If you're in with them, say so."

"Oh!" exclaimed the professor; "that's how the cat jumps, is it? Hold on a while, boss, and I'll see into your case."

He approached nearer, and found that he could dimly see the form of Jack Johnson, whose sepulchral voice had sounded so awful to him.

His hair was long and tangled, his face worn and haggard, more from the influence his evil passions came to have on him than from any want of food, for the doctor had given him beef and other delicacies, although he threatened at first to feed him on bread-and-water.

Jack was too young to have side-whiskers or a beard and mustache, so his face looked very pale.

The professor soon examined the manner in which he was bound to the rock.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he said, in a chuckling manner. "I have had experience in these matters.'

"What matters?" demanded Johnson.

"Jail-breaking."

"I'm not in jail."

"No, my friend. "You're a good deal worse off, and don't you forget it. But I am no friend of Rob Rollalong."

"Is that so?"

"Ye-s."

"Do you know the doc?"

"Have seen the doctor."

"And Kedge?"

"Don't like 'em for a cent. My pal and I are dead against him."

"Have you got a friend with you?"

"I have, name of Vangs. A highly respectable sort of villain, but he answers my purpose. I may say that I like a villain, only Vangs suits me a little too well."

"And you aren't in with the gang?"

"What gang?"

"Rob Rollalong's."

"No, sir. We ignore them. That is to say, frankly speaking, they won't have anything to say to us."

"How did you come here?" inquired Johnson.

"In a ship. How do you suppose?"

"Pshaw! I mean what got you on this island?"

"Got wrecked."

"How did you know Rob and the doctor?"

"Didn't know them at all. Vangs knew them. We were wrecked on another island inhabited by cannibals, and they brought us over here to eat us."

"You'd have disagreed with them, by the looks of you," replied Johnson, who couldn't help saying a disagreeable thing when he got the chance.

"You can't see much of me, and you are ungrateful when I'm trying to do my best for you."

"Cut me loose."

The professor drew his knife and soon unhitched Johnson from the rock.

"By George! you're the best friend I've seen in a month, except the whisky-bottle," said Johnson.

"I suppose you'll join us!" said the professor.

"We hate Rob Rollalong, and so do you."

"I'm with you; count me in," answered Johnson, adding: "Say, were you the party that old goat butted out of the cave just now?"

"I was."

"He's been snooting around me for a heap of time, and I believe he'd have gone for me if he hadn't seen you. Did he hurt you much?"

"You bet he did," replied the professor.

They walked out of the cave, and Jack made the acquaintance of Vangs, being introduced by the professor.

"Bless my cats!" exclaimed Vangs, "if this isn't a queer rig. The mushroom-eater found you in the cave, and I'll bet he thought you were the old 'un himself."

"Look at here," said the professor; "if I am the traveling President of the Philadelphia Society for the Further Development and Propagation of Edible Fungi, I don't want to be called a mushroom-eater by you or any other festive fungus. Take a turn with it, Mr. Vangs."

"Good enough," answered Vangs. "Let's compare logs. Mr. Johnson, listen to our log."

"With pleasure."

"I have known Rob Rollalong and Kedge Anchor for some time. We sailed in the same ship.

"I came into some property, and took Rob's girl away from him.

"Then I met with an accident, and I was advised to go to China for a change.

"Rob's girl, whose name is Hattie Elliott, and her mother, accompanied me in the *Dawning*, likewise the professor, member of the P. S. for the F. D. and P. of E. F.

"We were wrecked on a cannibal island; the cannibals brought us here to eat us at a great feast.

"It appears that Rob, Kedge, and a certain doctor were wrecked on this island.

"Any way, they came up in time to rescue us; but they took Hattie to their castle. Mrs. Elliott died in the storm; and they would have nothing to say to us—told us to rip, only a few hours ago. We wandered about, sucked turtles' eggs, and found the cave."

"Got butted by a billy-goat," put in the professor; "don't forget that."

"That's true; you live; and now, professor, have I stated my case right?"

"All right, my festive fungus."

"Don't you call me that no more!" exclaimed Vangs.

"Why not?"

"I object to it."

"All right, my mushroom."

"That's worse."

"Well," said the professor, "I've got to call you something, because you and me's got to get square."

"Dry up, you Todo Stools!" said Vangs. "You may be a man of science, and you may know all about grubbing up roots, but I want you to understand I'm your boss."

"That's all right, my festive fungus," replied the professor, who seemed to take a delight in tormenting and irritating Vangs.

The latter balanced himself on one crutch, and aimed a mighty blow at Todo Stools with the other. This he managed to elude by a nimble spring.

"You didn't do it that time, my pugilistic ball," he cried, laughing. "Try again."

"Here, I say," exclaimed Johnson, "pull down your vests, both of you. We ought to be united against the enemy."

"That's so," said Vangs.

"What's the use of quarreling amongst ourselves?"

"He's so ugly," exclaimed the professor, pointing to Vangs.

"Well, now, hush up!" said Johnson. "You've set me free, and you've got to hear my story. I sailed in the *J. B. Astor* with Doctor Ames, Kedge and Rob Rollalong. We were the only ones saved from the wreck, and the boys, having a spite against me, would not let me join the gang, but chained me up in this beastly old cave. You have liberated me, and I want to get up-sticks with my three enemies."

It will be observed that Jack Johnson did not tell the truth any more than Vangs did.

They both interlarded their stories with falsehoods.

"I'm your man," said Vangs. "Vengeance is my motto."

"That's right, my fighting fungus," said the professor, clapping his hands.

"At it again, are you?" cried Vangs.

"You can't have all the chaff to yourself," replied the professor. "I can guy as well as you."

"Now, see here, Todo Stools," said Vangs, "I've been a good friend to you, and when it comes to calling a man such names it's time it was stopped. I was never so slanged out of time in my life, Mr. Johnson."

"Oh, what's the odds?" replied Jack.

"It's a good deal of odds. He wouldn't dare to do it if I wasn't a cripple. He's awful mean, Mr. Johnson?"

"Take no notice of him. We've got to fight Rob Rollalong and his lot. They're a tough crowd. I tell you, and if we want to succeed, we must be like the bundle of sticks and hang together."

"Hang!" repeated the professor. "That's a bad word."

"I hope it isn't ominous of our fate," said Vangs.

"I didn't mean it that way, but they'll hang us, sure, if they catch us working against them," replied Johnson.

"What shall we do?" asked Vangs.

"Will you make me captain?"

"Ye-s."

"And you, professor?"

"I think you are the proper man," answered Mr. Todo Stools. "Vangs is disabled. I am a man of peace rather than of war, and my pursuits being of a scientific nature. You are young, courageous, and a representative American."

"Oh, hang that!" cried Johnson. "I'm no American. Don't call me a Yank: I'm British to the core. I was in the Royal Navy, and I'm a John Bull all up my back. I'm no Yankee."

"Well, well, I meant no offense."

"You couldn't offend me more than to call me an American. I hate you and hate your country like poison, but as we're in the same boat, I'll work for you and with you."

"Good," said the professor.

He regarded Johnson as a spiteful, ugly, dangerous fellow, but one likely to be useful to them, nevertheless.

"Where do the enemy live?" asked Vangs.

"In a place they call the castle."

"We will storm the castle."

"That is impossible. The house they live in was built many years ago by Robinson Crusoe, the famous castaway, and is surrounded by thick trees, so that it is impossible to approach it as you suggest."

"How do you know that?"

"Oh, they settled that question beyond a doubt, for the place is full of Crusoe relics. Our only chance is to spy upon them, and wait till they go out."

"Perhaps they will always leave one on guard."

"We might tackle him, but we could not attack three armed men," said Johnson.

"True enough."

"We must watch and wait. For the present, we have to make a little camp for ourselves."

"You can't suggest anything, professor."

Johnson shook his head.

"No cave for me," he replied. "I've had enough cave to last me a lifetime; besides, they'd find us there, as they come every now and then with food for me."

"Of course. How stupid of me to have forgotten that!" answered Todo Stools. "By-the-way, what did they put you in there for?"

"I wouldn't cotton to them at all, and when the wreck broke up I asked for shelter. They refused it, and I tried to burn them out."

"Burn the castle?"

"Yes. I'm an awful demon when I'm put out. By Jove! you've only got to offend me to find that out."

"Oh, don't blow!" exclaimed Vangs.

"I ain't blowing," replied Johnson.

"Yes, you are. I've got ducks as can quack as good as you."

"Ah! pshaw!" growled Vangs.

The party walked about until they found a pleasant camping-place.

It was a hollow between some rocks, and Vangs and the professor soon fell asleep, while Johnson, posting himself as guard or sentinel, walked up and down with a thick stick in his hand.

His mind was active, for he was planning vengeance on Doctor Ames, Rob Rollalong and Kedge.

The professor only wanted to get into comfortable quarters, and did not care about vengeance, for he had no personal feeling in the matter.

Vangs wanted Hattie, and wished to conquer Rob, because he hated him.

Only Vangs could only be king of the island!

He went to sleep thinking of this, and hoping that he would be able to make Rob and Kedge his slaves, Hattie should be his wife, Doctor Ames and Jack Johnson he would shoot, the professor should live, as he had always proved himself a ready tool and pleasant companion in spite of his late fondness for calling his benefactor a festive fungus and a miserable mushroom.

Yes, the professor should live.

Vangs wanted a companion, for, like all weak men, he could not stand alone, and more especially did he feel the need of moral support since he had killed poor Tommy, and his lameness had become chronic.

Vangs had no conscience.

His mind wasn't firmly strong enough to let him have that delicate mentor, but still his crimes troubled him.

The fact is, the worst of us have an innate sense of manliness, and when we do a dirty, mean thing, the better half of us reproaches us for it, and we feel that we are mean and contemptible.

That was how Vangs felt when he thought of his past life, but he hoped to be happy with Hattie as his wife, the professor as his companion, and Rob and Kedge as his slaves, to toil and work for him, under the hot sun of the pleasant isle of Juan Fernandez, while he rolled at his ease in the shade, and toyed with the tangle of his pretty Hattie's hair.

Dreams—all dreams!

We shall see presently how his project succeeded.

[To be continued.]

"Rob Rollalong" was commenced in No. 275.

A TERRIBLE FIGHT FOR LIFE.

SOME time ago ex-Judge Troy, of Brooklyn, became the possessor of the Siberian bloodhound "Satan," known to sporting men throughout the country as a terrible fighter. But the dog was so treacherous in his disposition that ex-Judge Troy turned him over to a clerk in his office, Mr. E. Haerling, who, having been an athletic performer in a number of circuses, had become accustomed to entering the cages of wild beasts, under the instructions of a number of animal trainers.

Mr. Haering agreed to take the dog to his father's premises, in Atlantic, near Alabama Avenue, East New York, providing that ex-Judge Troy would pay for the animal's keeping. Mr. Troy willingly consented to this, and a cage ten feet long, seven feet wide and ten feet high was constructed in Mr. Haering's garden, and "Satan" was placed in it.

One day recently "Satan" began to howl, as was his custom when he wanted food or water. Haering went into the garden to feed the dog, accompanied by half-a-dozen persons, curious to see the brute. After giving the dog meat, Haering procured some water, stepped with it into the cage, and then bolted the cage on the outside. He usually went into the cage to feed the animal, and always on such occasions carried a heavy loaded riding-whip.

On this occasion he had neglected to take the whip with him. Haering set the pan of water on the floor; but the dog seemed disinclined to drink, refused to be patted, and walked restlessly up and down the cage.

Haering saw that Satan was in one of his worst humors, and turned to go out of the cage. He had no sooner turned his back than the animal sprang upon him. Haering threw himself to one side, but the dog's paws struck him on the shoulder, and dog and man fell to the floor together.

Haering sprang quickly to his feet, and the dog jumped at him and sunk his teeth into the man's right arm. Haering, quick as lightning, pitched the dog over on his back, and was just going to jump on his paws, as the brute recovered himself and sprang for Haering's throat. With one hand Haering grasped the dog's leg, and with the other caught him by the upper eyelid, and did not let go his hold until he had torn the animal's scalp to the back of the head. The dog fell back with Haering on top. Both got their feet, and Haering sprang for the gate of the cage. The dog dashed at him again, and Haering clinched the brute and tried to set his teeth into his shaggy neck. He failed, but caught the dog's ear with his teeth, and held on until he had cut it off, and then he hurled the brute to the floor and fell himself. The dog rushed at Haering again just as he was getting up, and bit him in the left hand. Haering thrust his hand into the brute's throat, and tried to smother him. In the struggle both fell again, and the dog lacerated Haering's left hand.

"Unbolt the gate—quick!" shouted Haering to the men, who were standing fifty feet away; but no one dared to come to the rescue.

Haering then threw himself on the dog and set his teeth into his throat, and at the same time grasped the dog by the upper jaw with his right hand, pressing down the lower jaw with his left arm until the flesh at the sides of the dog's mouth was torn by the strain. Dog and man struggled about the cage for at least five minutes. At last they reached the door. Haering, still keeping his teeth fixed in the animal's neck, lifted him up and pinned him against the side of the cage. Then with his right hand he unbolted the door of the cage, and got outside, at the same time drawing the dog's head through and closing the gate on his neck. Then he pressed upon the gate with all his might. He held the dog in this way until he felt his strength failing, and then letting go the dog's neck with his teeth, he opened the gate slightly, and with a quick kick knocked the dog inside and closed and locked the gate.

Both Haering and the dog were covered with blood. Haering's lacerated hand bled fast, and blood was running from the brute's throat. Dr. Allen was sent for, and he dressed Haering's wounds. Four of the veins in his hand were found to have been torn, and they have begun to bleed afresh twice since they were dressed. Haering had to be removed to Dr. Allen's house for constant medical treatment. He was rapidly improving at last accounts. He says he regrets a member of the family poisoned the dog, for if it had recovered from the wound in its throat he intended to enter the cage, armed with a heavy whip, and beat the animal into submission.

CARVE little boy in the public school traps a mouse and cages him up in a figbox with six healthy hornets. Teacher comes round the corner. Boy hides box inside shirt. Lid of figbox comes off. Grand pas *seul*, with music by the boys.

CHRISTMAS DINNER PRIZE.

WE offer a prize of THREE DOLLARS to the young lady or young man among our readers who will send us the best account of what *she* or *he* would like for a Christmas dinner. All answers to be mailed on the 15th of January. Those answers which are very good, even if they do not get a prize, will be published in the BOYS' AND GIRLS'

WEEKLY. Warn all your friends, and do not make the answers too long. One page of writing-paper for each answer is enough.

TO BE READ BY ALL OUR YOUNG FRIENDS.

WE are about to begin a new year, and in doing so we wish to inform you that we intend making the BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY more popular than ever.

In addition to the prizes that we are now giving for Drawing and Round Table, in a short time we intend to give prizes for the best pieces of poetry, then for the best little sketch written to fit a picture that we shall give you to describe, then for the best piece of mechanical work done by youthful hands, etc., etc.

We wish to encourage our young friends to employ their leisure hours by entering into an honorable rivalry with companions of their own age, and who knows but that by so doing we may unearth some budding genius, and help to advance a Stephenson or a Fulton! All articles receiving prizes will be illustrated, and the winner will, in addition to the prize, receive a certificate of merit.

We are going to give you some good, honest stories of adventures, hunting, daring escapes, etc., and have made arrangements to that effect with some of the best authors in the world.

We wish to see the BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY received in every household in the country, and we also wish every mother and father to confess that it contains only good, interesting and useful matter.

Of course we desire all our young friends to help us in this course, and with that idea we want them to circulate the BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY among their friends, show it to their parents, and get them to subscribe for the coming year.

At the present moment our Drawing Table and Round Table keep our hands full, but as soon as we are ready to give prizes for some new feature we shall warn you in time, so that you will all have an equal chance.

THE DRAWING-TABLE.

FOURTH COMPETITION.

PRIZE WINNERS.

1.—Lewis S. Bea, 1903 Parrish Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

2.—Charles C. Judson, Kansas City, Mo.

3.—Charles Prior, 348 West Forty-fifth Street, New York City.

HONORABLE MENTION.

Louis Grostemacher, Galveston, Texas.
A. B. Scott, 20 Patchen Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Willie Swan, Janesville, Wis.
Charles Prior, 348 West Forty-fifth Street, New York City.
Daniel R. Hogan, 341 West Thirty-seventh Street, New York City.
W. H. Calvin, Youngstown, Mahoning Co., Ohio.
Fred. Ochiey, 103 Essex Street, New York City.
Henry Gstoteil, care of E. Dennett, Webster House, Sabattus, Me.
Master Charles C. Judson, Kansas City, Mo.
A. Keller, 237 East Eighty-fourth Street, New York City.
Eddie Coffin, 335 Amherst Street, Manchester, N. H.
William P. Stair, Hanover, Pa.
Frank Holtman, 506 Niagara Street, Buffalo, N. Y.
Burt Rintz, Sharpsburg.
Frank S. Harris, Richmond, Va.
G. E. Grass, Sunbury, Pa.
Robert Meeks, Box 136, Muncie, Ind.
Adela C. Green, Danville, Va.
Louis Farrell, 30 Payne Street, Nashville, Tenn.
Thomas F. Byron, 304 West Forty-fifth Street, New York City.
Joseph Cody, 79 Union Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Charles Snyder, Lock Haven, Pa.
B. F. Bright, Jr., Northumberland Co., Sunbury Pa.
Charles Volker (send address).
Charles Maurer (send address).
Otis J. Fall, 103 N. Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Md.
John Conoway, 1137 Twenty-first Street, between L and M Streets, Washington, D. C.
Herman Gallschinsky, Bay City, Mich.
A. Manger, care of C. W. Herr, corner Main and Seventh streets, Dubuque, Iowa.
Frank McHaffie, Box 152, Bradford, Ontario, Canada.
John Kiefe, South Toledo, Ohio.
Frank P. Newton, Lock-Box 1078, Pittsfield, Pa.
J. B. Orr, Bridgeport, Conn.
John L. Heffermann, Marquette, Lake Superior, Mich.
P. M. Hettler, 845 North Eighth Street, Reading, Pa.
Fred S. Safer, 730 Grove Street, San Francisco, Cal.
Louis S. Rea, 1903 Parrish Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

The following candidates have been heard from, and their drawings will be decided upon next week:

J. B. Orr, A. Lipphard, Fred. Miller, F. Donovan, George L. Swain, Ernie Hewitt, William H. Meeker, Walter Heck, George A. Ingalls, Layton G. Tucker, C. Tighe, Stephen Leo, Thomas Doran, John McIntosh, Miss Lizzie Folsom, R. Backmann, Fred. Van Odd, Agnes W. Combs, Frank M. Donovan, Alfred R. Douglas, Zella A. Douglas, John Barkiewicz, Irvine J. Chester, Thomas Brown, S. M. Rand, Michael Hymes, Washie Vanderlip, Ernest Schwarze, Anthony Nehrbas, William Conoway, Julia A. Coburn, Miss Minnie Logan, Edwin Smith, Master Westlotan, N. M. E. Roshart (no address).

For the benefit of any of our young readers who may not have noticed our previous announcement, we beg to state that, for the present, we are giving three prizes for drawings executed by any of our young friends without any assistance from teachers, parents or others. The prizes are $3, $2, and $1, respectively, accompanied by a certificate of merit inscribed with the name and address of the winner. Any drawing that is not quite good enough for one of the prizes, but which has great merit, will receive honorable mention in our columns, as well as a certificate of merit.

All our young readers must try, and if they do not win a prize the first time, let them try again.

THE ROUND TABLE.

PRIZES.

To be Read by all who Send Answers.

FOR A COMPLETE SET OF ANSWERS TO ALL THE ENIGMAS, ETC., IN THIS NUMBER.

For the best and earliest, due allowance being made for the distance of each competitor - $5.00
For the next best - - - - - 3.00
For the third in merit and promptness - - 1.00

N. B.—There is no prize offered for an answer to only one puzzle or riddle. The answers must be to ALL. Competitors in all parts of the country have an equal chance.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES, ETC., IN No. 687.

1. Cat-line. 2. Strode, Trode, Rode, Ode. 3. Iris, Lily, Pansy, Pink, Aster, Daisy. 4. Kairon—Kite, Alma, Iceland, Richard, Olympus, Nile. 5. Rain, Rein, Reign. 6. Flew, Lava, Even, Want.

7.

B
ARK
FLOW
CROWBAR
BROWNETES
RALEIGH
LOTAH
SEE

8. Minim. 9. Eye. 10. Dante, Data. 11. Spain, Lie, Spaniel.

WINNERS OF PRIZES IN No. 687.

1.—Miss Lizzie Brady, 1306 South Fifth Street, St. Louis, Mo.

2.—No second. 3.—No third.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Foundation Words.

A RENDTARK, pin, a book, an ax, a needle,
A mutton chop, a slate, a pin, a spade,
A nail, an egg, a pie, a parish beadle,
Each one of these in prinals is surveyed.

A noble mansion by a park surrounded,
With fields and woodland spreading far and wide,
Where oft the hunting horse and stag have bounded,
The finals in this scene can be described.

Cross Words.

A kind of science is by first denoted;
The letter s begins and ends its name;
If e'er your time to cricket is devoted,
You'll know what's next, if you know the game.

A certain plant that sometimes on one's table
Is seen at dinner-time, in third is shown;
Now all who strive to solve this mystery sable
Must write for fourth a fruit that's not much known.

A word of letters four my fifth will state, or,
To be quite plain, a kind of bog or fen;
The folks that live about the earth's equator
Are seen in what for this, my sixth, I pen.

By next a messenger is made explicit;
And in my eighth a kind of scarf is seen;
One moment more your notice I solicit,
My last's the servant of a king or queen.

2.—MONOPHONE.

I was sitting all alone,
One dark and stormy night,
When some one at my door
Did give a first so light.

Then a woman, with a next
Wound round her form and head,
Looked in and said, "Can you
Give a woman poor a bed?"

"I think you are mistaken,"
I hastened to reply;
Then I showed her where she could
Get lodgings just close by.

3.—CHARADE.

My first is in most shops;
In every window my second.
My whole is used for the bed,
And in Winter a comfort is reckoned.

4.—CHARADE.

My first you are oft on a hot Summer's day;
A cavern my second to you will display.
Those words join together a poet they name,
Whose writings stand high in the annals of fame.

5.—DECAPITATION.

Dear reader, your name
Perhaps is the same
As the subject of my con.
And first, I may say
That you hear it every day,
For B is a common one.

Its head now erase,
And then in its place
Another, described, you will view
My riddle is done,
So unto each one
Of you I will now bid adieu.

6.—DECAPITATION.

This ladies used to do of old,
No doubt you often have been told:
Behead me, and you surely see
What oft is used by you and me;
If you behead me once again,
A preposition will remain.

7.—DECAPITATION.

Where'er I rule supreme o'er good,
Discomfort must be rife;
Behead me, though I am not food,
You live on me through life.

8.—TRANSPOSITION.

My first's a fruit that's liked by all;
Transpose, and you will see
A seed; 'tis ate by birdies small,
But not by you or me.

9.—METAGRAM.

A sort of fuel is this, I ween,
Not now much used and seldom seen;
Change head, this gives in Winter cold
Much comfort both to young and old;
Again change head, and when you're tired
You'll say this is to be desired.
Lastly change head, and you will find
A great deal of the limbs or mind.

10.—POLYPHONE.

FIRST.

Ravaging devastation through the land;
Tall chimneys down, large clouds of dust and sand.
Ricks overwhelmed, old buildings torn and burst.
The cause? Nay, look no further; 'tis my first.

"Breakers ahead!" At sea that fearful cry—
A flying bark, no human succor nigh;
Then, in an instant, cries of fear and pain.
The cause my first—my fearful first again.

A Summer's day; the sun, like molten lead,
Its scorching heat throws on my throbbing head;
In vain I try to cool it. Oh, 'twill burst!
Oh, for a cooling zephyr of my first!

INTERLUDE.

In spelling, first like second will be found;
The difference is detected in the sound.

SECOND.

How pleasant to ramble, I'm sure,
Through the woods and the valleys so fair,
To watch the lark second on high,
As he warbles his notes in the air!

I've rambled the wild mountain-side,
And perhaps you the same may have done,
Where the paths second steeply on high,
Where the wild mountain sheep often run.

And I love such a ramble, I'm sure,
When the sun tips the hills in the morn,
And to hear in the valley below
The loud second of the huntsman's horn.

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A NOVEL MARINE CAPTURE.—EX-GOVERNOR PACHECO LASSOES A BUCK IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY.

A NOVEL MARINE CAPTURE.

EX-GOVERNOR ROMUALDO PACHECO, of California, who will be remembered politically as a recent contestant for a seat in Congress, is also known throughout the Pacific Slope as a mighty hunter of grizzlies and wolves, and almost anything that has hair and ferocity enough to make chase dangerous or capture worth the while.

One morning some time ago he had an exceedingly novel adventure. He had been cruising in his yacht *Consuelo* in San Francisco Bay, and was nearing Angel Island, when his attention was called by the crew to an unusual troubling of the waters near the shore of Angel Island by some monster, which the old shellbacks aboard had concluded must be a double-barreled swordfish. Mr. Pacheco's keener eye instantly recognized what had been mistaken for swords as the antlers of a magnificent three-year-old buck, which had probably just completed the voyage down from the forests of Washington Territory.

Hastily improvising a lasso out of the main halyard, he ordered a boat lowered away, and had himself pulled swiftly to the game. The boat had got to within about sixty feet of the buck, as it was about to wade out into the stone quarries on the island, when the governor, rising in the bows, gracefully swung the coiled rope three times around his head, and then cast the deadly loop through the air and over the buck's neck.

The buck abruptly drew the boat ashore, and scattered it and its crew round among the sharp-edged rocks, with no special care for regularity, and then started out for a canter with the novel appendage of an ex-governor. But Mr. Pacheco was powerful, too, and it seemed a very even toss up whether the buck had lassoed Mr. Pacheco or Mr. Pacheco the buck.

At the end of an hour, the buck being pretty well peeled, and the ragged edges of Angel Island rock fluttering with remains of gubernatorial garments, Mr. Pacheco vanquished the brute, which was brought to San Francisco and presented to the post-commandant at Goat Island.

A DOG'S DIVE FOR A HAMMER.

STORIES of canine sagacity are always of interest to that large majority of boys who have a feeling of affection for man's best and most faithful friend among the animals, and here is a fresh and true one all the way from Georgia: A gentleman living near Sandersville has a very intelligent pointer, that is so well trained that his master can send him home with a note for anything he may want, and he always attends to the errands with great promptness. One day, recently, his master, while walking around his premises, found a loose plank on his fence and sent the dog to the house with a note for a hammer and some nails. His mistress put the hammer and nails in a basket and gave them to the pointer. On returning to his master he had to cross a narrow stream of water. Reaching the stream, he gave one bound and was over. His owner, who was in sight, saw him set the basket down and commence to jump from the bank into the stream. He continued this performance so long that his master hastened to the spot to see what it all meant. He discovered that in jumping the stream, the dog dropped the hammer from the basket into the water and was diving after it.

A GEORGIA DOG DIVING FOR A HAMMER WHICH HE HAD DROPPED IN A STREAM.

CHRISTMAS GAMES.

[Continued.]

The Family Coach.

EACH person in company represents something connected with a family coach; one is the harness, another the horses, a third the coachman, a fourth the footman, a fifth, sixth, and seventh, the pole, whip, and drag, and so on, till each player has a representative office. One of the company begins to relate an anecdote, and each time he mentions the "family coach," all the players must rise from their seats, and turn round. When he mentions harness, or wheels, or pole, or any other part of the equipage, the persons representing those parts must rise, each at the mention of his name, and turn round. Failing to do this, they pay a forfeit. The story itself will be something in the following way:

"You must all have heard, at some time or other, of my friend, Mr. Timothy Tugmutton. He lived in a capital house at Wandsworth, with Mrs. Tugmutton, and all the little Tugmuttons, who all had snub noses and crooked legs, and were considered very like their father. He was a very comfortable sort of man, Mr. Tugmutton, and liked to have a good establishment about him, a steady *coachman* (coachman rises and turns round), a tall *footman* (footman does likewise), and everything comfortable and handsome: but the thing he prided himself on most of all was his *family coach* (all the players rise and turn round). This *family coach* (all turn round again) was a very complete machine in its way. It had real *wheels* (wheels turn round), and a *pole* (pole turns), and there was a good set of *harness*, and a pair of *horses*, and a *drag*, and everything complete; in fact, it was a famous *family coach*."

Then he proceeds to describe Timothy Tugmutton ordering out this famous vehicle for a drive; and an accident that takes place involving endless difficulties with the coachman, footman, harness, horses, and every part of the turn-out, ending with the expression of a fixed determination on the part of Mr. Tugmutton to get rid of his equipage as soon as possible, and to be bothered no more with the *family coach*. If well managed, this game cannot fail to produce plenty of fun and forfeits.

Earth, Air and Water.

One of the players is furnished with a handkerchief, which he throws suddenly and unexpectedly at another, crying out the name of "earth," "air," or "water," whichever he likes, and then counting ten as rapidly as he can. Before he has come to ten, the person at whom the handkerchief is thrown must name some creature that inhabits the element thus mentioned, or, failing to do this, pays a forfeit. Thus, suppose the thrower of the handkerchief says WATER—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, TEN, the person challenged must call the name of some fish; if air, the name of a bird; or, if earth, that of a quadruped. If the question is put very abruptly, and the number quickly counted, the players will often be unable to get out their reply quick enough, and the forfeits will come in merrily. The best way is to look at one person, and then unexpectedly throw the handkerchief at another.

The Grand Panjandrum

is an exercise of the wits. It was invented many years ago, in Johnson and Goldsmith's time, by Foote, a clever writer. Foote was one day at an inn taking his wine after dinner with some other guests, when a pompous, self-satisfied man began boasting of his memory, and declaring that he would undertake to repeat anything of moderate length after hearing it once. Foote took him at his word, and completely posed him by the following outburst, which was considered so good that it has ever since been preserved as a choice puzzle in the form of a round game. The fun and the difficulty of recollecting the sentences lie in the utter absurdity of the composition, which runs thus:

"So she went into the garden to cut a cabbage-leaf, to make an apple-pie. A great she-bear coming up the hill, poked her head into the barber's shop—'What! no soap?' So he died, and she very imprudently married the barber; and there were present the Picaninnies, the Jobillities, and Gentillities, and the grand Panjandrum himself, with the little round button at the top, and they all fell to playing at catch as catch can, till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of their boots.

Proper Fly.

The players are seated at a table, and each puts his two forefingers on the board before him. The leader cries out, "Pigeons fly!" and suddenly lifts his hands in the air to imitate the action of flying; all the players have to do likewise. The leader raises his hands each time he calls out a name, but the others must only remove their hands from the table at the names of such creatures as really fly. The leader's object is to entrap them into incurring forfeits by lifting their hands at the wrong time, which, under judicious management, some of them are sure to do. Thus the leader cries in rapid succession—"Crows fly!—Eagles fly!—Goats fly!—Sparrows fly!—*Horses fly!*" In the excitement of the game, some are sure to lift their hands from the table, oblivious of the fact that horses do not fly, and they pay forfeits accordingly.

[To be continued.]

A THING TO BE PROUD OF.

"HOW does it taste, I wonder?" said Jamie, as he saw Patrick Flynn take a glass of steaming punch from the bar of a restaurant.

"Did you ever taste strong drink, James?" said a handsome old man, standing by.

"Never," said Jamie. "I wonder if it's good."

"I cannot tell how it tastes," said Mr. Landers. "I am sixty years old, and never tasted it in my life, and I am proud to say it. I see what it does. It has cheated poor Flynn out of his song little home; it has clothed his poor wife and children in rags, and made him cross and quarrelsome. It is liquid fire and theft and poison. I don't want to know how it tastes."

"Neither do I," said Jamie. Thank you, Mr. Landers, for what you have said. When I am a man sixty years old, I, too, will have it to say, 'I never tasted strong drink in my life.'"